MANORAMA

TELL ME WHY

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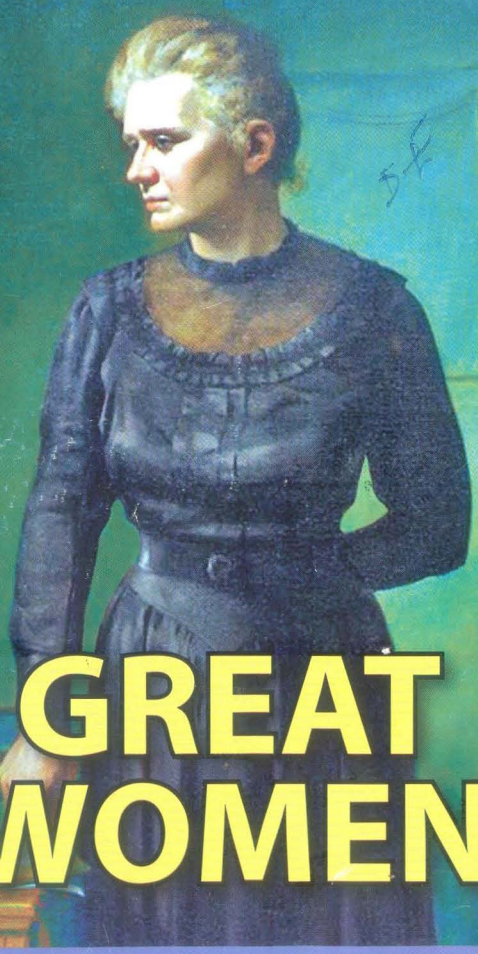

GREAT WOMEN

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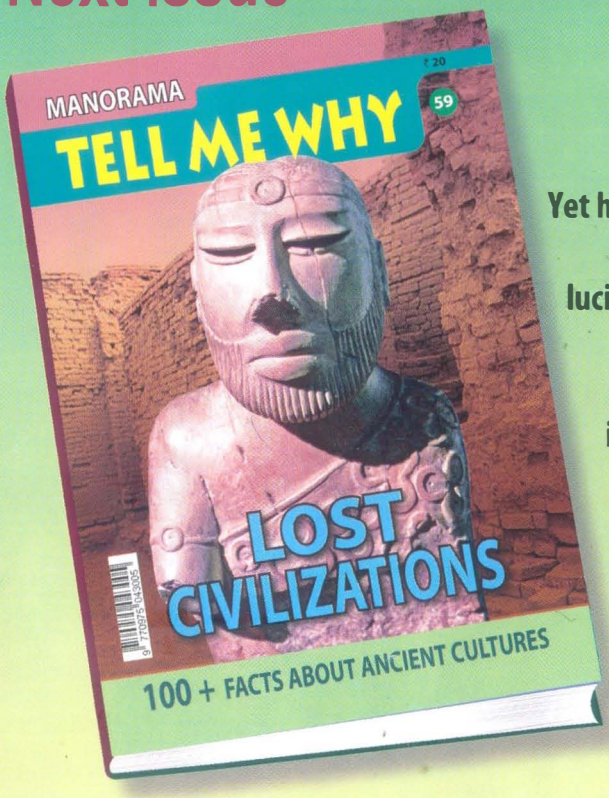

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The Fragrance of Greatness

"Great people are meteors designed to burn so that the Earth may be lighted", said Napoleon Bonaparte. It is the perfect blend of extraordinary talent and passion that leads people to the pinnacle of greatness.

There was a time when everybody believed that history is only the biography of great 'men'. Legendary women of the past, like Cleopatra, have been the exception, not the rule. This is no longer true. The history of the modern world also includes the lives of great women. Through the ages, women did come to the forefront, and their genius could not be confined by the walls of society.

This issue of Manorama Tell Me Why takes a look at the luminous lives of great women - extraordinary women who changed the world. The world has known so many great women, that some names had to be left out due to space constraints. We hope to include them in a separate issue in future.

FROM THE HOUSE OF MAGIC POT, MANORAMA YEAR BOOK, VANITHA, THE WEEK AND THE MALAYALA MANORAMA DAILY

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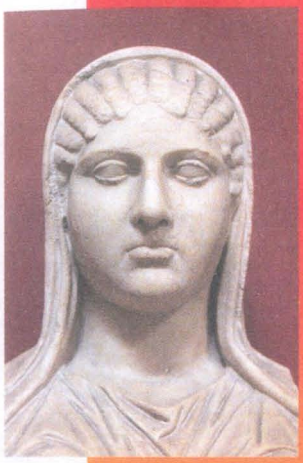
GREAT WOMEN

Why was Aspasia unlike other women of Ancient Greece?

Aspasia will go down in history as one of the first truly liberated women, not just in Ancient Greece, but in the world. She was born into a wealthy family around 400 BC, in the Ionian city of Miletus, which is a part of modern Turkey. As a child, Aspasia received an excellent education, unlike most girls of that era.

Aspasia's family moved to Athens and settled there. Since she was not Athenian by birth, Aspasia was free of the legal restraints that bound other Athenian women. She became the wife of a famous Athenian named Pericles, and had a son who was also called Pericles.

Aspasia gained fame, as the leader of a highly independent group of women, who were beautiful, educated, accomplished entertainers. They even paid taxes like men did! Aspasia herself influenced not only her husband and her son, but also the course of Athenian politics. In fact, it is believed that she was responsible for a couple of wars like the Athenian attack on Samos, and the Archimedean War. So great was her power and influence that she has found mention in the works of the great writers of the time like Plato, Aristophanes, and Xenophon.



Aspasia's Marble Herm

Why was Hypatia disliked?

Hypatia was the daughter of a teacher of mathematics, who lived in Alexandria in Ancient Egypt. She studied under her father, and other great scholars of the time, including Plutarch. Hypatia herself grew up to become a renowned scholar and teacher, who wrote on mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy.

Hypatia has many achievements to her credit. She wrote about the movements of the planets, and the numbers theory. She also invented the plane astrolabe, the graduated brass hydrometer and the hydroscope, along with one of her students and colleagues. Besides being a teacher and inventor, Hypatia was a powerful political force in the city.

Hypatia was bold and fearless. She scorned women's clothing, and dressed like a scholar. She moved about freely like men did, and drove her own chariot. She had many enemies who distrusted her teachings. These enemies finally led an attack against her, and Hypatia was killed by a violent mob. Yet her memory lives on, and though her works were destroyed, we know of her writings through the works of other great writers.

STAR FACT

Sappho

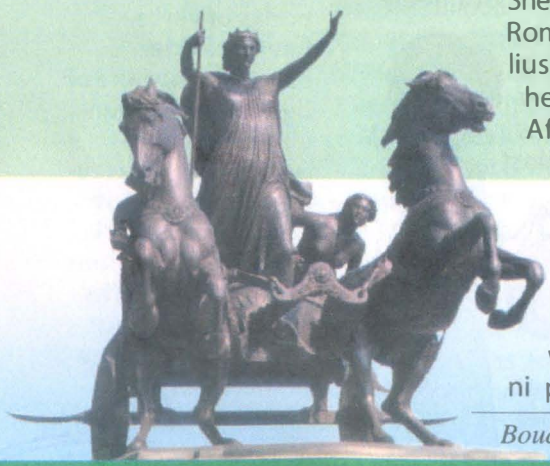
Sappho was one of the greatest and earliest of women poets. She lived on the island of Lesbos, in the late 600's BC. Most of Sappho's works- about 10 books of verse- have been destroyed. Only one of her poems has survived in its complete form. Whatever we know about her poetry today is from the quotations found in the works of others. Without doubt, she was one of the best lyric poets of Ancient Greece.

Why is Cleopatra considered to be a legendary figure in Roman history?

Who has not heard of Cleopatra, the beautiful ruler of Ancient Egypt? She is one of the greatest political and romantic figures in history. She called herself the daughter of the Egyptian Sun God Ra, and became the ruler of Egypt along with her younger brother in 51 BC, at a time when Egypt was facing great hardship. The Romans were seizing more and more Egyptian territories, and there was widespread famine throughout the land. Cleopatra herself had many enemies who succeeded in driving her out of the country. They then seized power in the name of her younger brother, who was also the ruler.

Cleopatra

However, Cleopatra was not to be dismissed so lightly. She sought the help of Rome's greatest general, Julius Caesar, and he helped her to get back her throne. After Caesar's death, one



Boudicca's Statue

Why is Boudicca a great warrior queen?

Boudicca, a woman of unusual courage, was the queen of the Iceni people of Eastern Eng-

STAR FACT **Cleopatra's Needle**

Cleopatra's Needle is located on the Thames Embankment in London. It was made in Egypt for the Pharaoh Thutmose III in 1460 BC, making it almost 3,500 years old. It actually has nothing to do with Cleopatra at all, since it was erected about 1500 years before her birth! Actually there are three Cleopatra's Needles- London, Paris and New York.

of his loyal generals, Mark Antony became her husband. Mark Antony divorced his Roman wife to marry Cleopatra, and this greatly angered the Romans. Julius Caesar's nephew, Octavius Caesar, declared war on Egypt, and defeated Mark Antony, who committed suicide.

Cleopatra too chose to die, rather than be taken a prisoner of Rome. She had a basket of figs, in which a snake was concealed, smuggled into her room. She died of snakebite, but became immortal for the beauty, charm, and charisma that had captured the hearts of two of the most powerful men in the world at that time.

Antony and Cleopatra

Antony and Cleopatra is a tragedy by William Shakespeare, which follows the relationship between Cleopatra and Mark Antony from the time of the Parthian War to Cleopatra's suicide.

land. She led a major uprising against occupying Roman forces. Boudicca was married to Prasutagus, ruler of the Iceni people of East Anglia. When the Romans conquered Southern England in AD 43, they allowed Prasutagus to continue to rule. However, when Prasutagus died, the Romans decided to rule the Iceni directly. Boudicca herself was stripped and beaten by the Romans, and she rose in fury to lead an uprising

Why was Hildegard of Bingen called 'Sybil of the Rhine'?

Hildegard of Bingen was a medieval mystic or prophet and visionary. As a young girl, she had visions connected with an illness, and was sent to a monastery where she was put under the care of a noblewoman and resident there, named Jutta. It was Jutta who taught Hildegard to read and write. In time, Hildegard learned Latin, read the scriptures, and had access to many other books of religious and philosophical nature. She took the veil and made her nun's vows at the age of 15. A convent was built next to the monastery, and Hildegarde became the abbess. She then founded a convent at Bingen.

Hildegard produced major works of theology and visionary

Hildegard - A Painting

against them.

Tall, red haired, and ferocious, Boudicca struck terror into the hearts of the Romans as she led her equally fearsome looking warriors against Roman strong holds. She went from victory to victory, and showed no mercy to her enemies. Even when she was defeated, she remained defiant and untamed. Her final defeat came in 61 AD, when she survived the battle, but killed herself by taking poison. Boudicca remains alive forever as a symbol of independence and determination.

writings - the Scivias. She was also believed to have been the illustrator of the Scivias, and therefore, one of the few identifiable women artists of the Middle Ages. She was famous for writing sacred music and writing about natural history and medicine. She was so well respected that she was consulted by, and advised bishops, popes, and kings. These accomplishments gave Hildegard of Bergen the name of the 'Sibyl of the Rhine'.

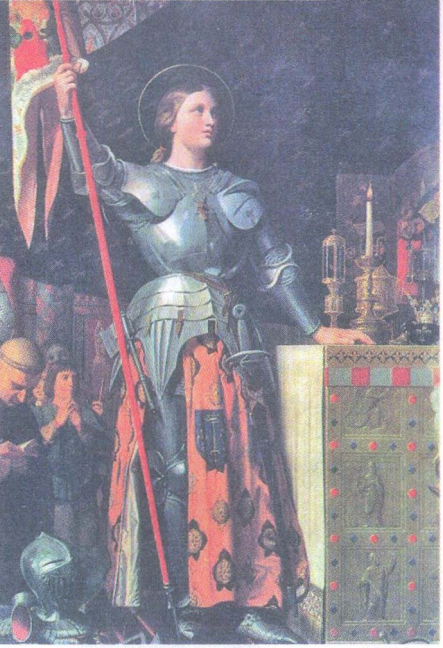
Why was Eleanor of Aquitaine considered to be a colourful personality?

Eleanor of Aquitaine was fifteen years old in 1137 AD, and not yet married, when her father, the Duke of Aquitaine, died suddenly. Eleanor had no brothers, so she inherited her father's duchy, which included most of Southern France. This inheritance made her one of the richest women in Europe.

Eleanor was well educated. She could read and write Latin, and was well versed in music and literature too. She married the King of France Louis VII, and moved to Paris, where she set a trend for luxury and sophistication in the medieval world. She was an ardent supporter of the Crusades and she created a sensation when she dressed like an Amazon, and galloped through the crowds on a white horse, urging people to join the Crusades too. She herself even went on a Crusade with Louis.

Eleanor later divorced Louis, and married Henry who became the King of England. She lived into her eighties, surviving her son Richard, and saw her son John become King of England. Her last years were spent, as the abbess of a convent in Aquitaine, where she died at the age of 82.

Eleanor of Aquitaine



Joan of Arc - A Painting

Why is Joan of Arc considered to be the national heroine of France?

Joan of Arc was born in 1412, in the little village of Domrémy in France. Her father had often told her of the sad condition of France, how the country was largely in the possession of England, and how the French king did not dare to be crowned. This made Joan very sad, and she brooded over the matter so much that she began to have visions of angels, and heard strange voices, which said to her, 'Joan, you can deliver the land from the English. Go to the relief of King Charles of France'.

Joan believed that she had a mission from God, and she was determined to try to save France. Though everyone tried to dissuade her, she did not change her mind. She went to the king, and asked him to allow her to lead his soldiers to victory against the English. The king agreed, and when she was just 18 years old, Joan led an army of about 5000 men against the English, who had surrounded the city of Orleans. Mounted on a fine war-horse, and clad in white armour from head to foot, she rode along past the cheering multitude. In one hand she

carried an ancient sword, and in the other, a white banner embroidered with lilies.

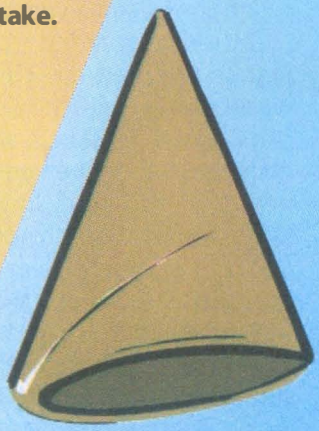
Joan was able to enter Orleans, and she led her men to victory after victory against the English. Her fame spread everywhere, and the English as well as the French thought she had more than human power. At last, the English were driven far to the north of France. Then Charles, urged by Joan, went to Rheims, with twelve thousand soldiers, and there, in Joan's presence, was crowned king.

Sadly, Joan was later betrayed and accused of being a tool of the devil. She was tried, and was burned at the stake. Later, she was declared to be a saint by the Catholic Church, and to this day, she is considered to be the national heroine of France.

STAR FACT

Dunce's Cap

You know what a dunce's cap is, don't you? They are very popular at parties now, and are often worn by comedians too. But these paper cones were once worn as a punishment by students, who were lazy or slow. The caps had their origins in the Middle Ages, when these pointed caps were placed on the heads of witches. Since Joan was accused of being a witch, it is believed that she was made to wear one when she was burned at the stake.



Dunce's Cap

Why is CatherinedeMedici known as 'the mother of kings'?

Catherine de Medici played an important part in the historyofsixteenth century France. She had a sad childhood, for both her parents died when she was just a year old. She was brought up by nuns, who trained and disciplined her. As she grew older, she became very well-educated.

Catherine de Medici

Catherine married King Henri II of France and had ten children, seven of whom survived. Three of her sons became kings of France, and through her children, Catherine wielded enormous power in the land. In fact, she was a majorforce in French politics, especially during the thirty years of the Roman Catholic-Huguenot wars. Catherine was a Roman Catholic, but when trying to create a balance with religions, she sometimes agreed with the Huguenots. By doing this, she created a policy of peace between the Catholics and the Protestants.

Catherine had a great interest in architecture, and she demonstrated this with her authority over the building of the new wing of the Louvre Museum,theconstruction of the Tuilleries Gardens, and the building of the Chateau Monceau. As a great patron of the arts, she helped the Renaissance flourish, and is sometimes called a 'renaissance woman'.

STAR FACT

Queen Elizabeth I

Elizabeth was the daughter of King Henry VIII, and his second wife Anne Boleyn. She came to the throne only after much turmoil, on 17th November 1558. Elizabeth was dedicated to her country in a way few monarchs had been, or have been since. She had the mind of a political genius, and nurtured her country through careful leadership and by choosing capable men to assist her. In appearance she was extravagant, in behaviour sometimes flippant and frivolous, but her approach to politics was serious, conservative, and cautious. When she ascended the throne, England was an impoverished country torn apart by religious squabbles. When she died at Richmond Palace on the 24th March 1603, England was one of the most powerful and prosperous countries in the world.

Queen Elizabeth I

Catherine the Great

Why was Catherine the Great given this title?

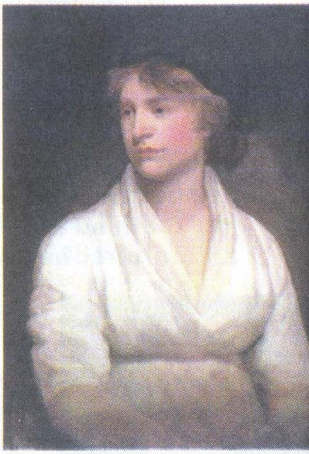
Catherine the Great was a German princess. She married Prince Carl Peter Ulrich, the heir to the Russian throne. Being a bright personality with a strong sense of determination, she joined the Russian Orthodox Church, learned the Russian language, and by doing a lot of reading, acquired a brilliant education.

In June 1762, Catherine

took an active part in a coup against her husband Emperor Peter III. He was overthrown, and soon killed 'in an accident', while Catherine became Russia's autocratic ruler. Throughout her long reign, many reforms were undertaken, and the territory of Russia was further extended by acquiring the lands of Southern Ukraine and the Crimea. She promoted westernization and modernization as well as education. She was one of the greatest of Russian rulers, and hence her title, Catherine the Great. During her reign, Catherine continued the reforms begun by Peter the Great that ultimately led to the emergence of Russia onto the worldwide stage of politics.

Why is Mary Wollstonecraft considered Britain's earliest feminist?

Mary Wollstonecraft was an English philosopher and writer. Her life was not an easy one. Her father was often violent and reckless with money. He also showed a marked preference for her brother, which made her life at home quite miserable. As a result, she became an early feminist who denied male supremacy, and advocated equal education and opportunities for women. She was one of the first people to argue for gender equality, and is best remembered for her work 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman,' written in 1792. She led a radical and exciting life, mainly in London, but with significant time in France during the Revolution, and with life-changing visits to Ireland, Lisbon, Derbyshire, and Scandinavia.



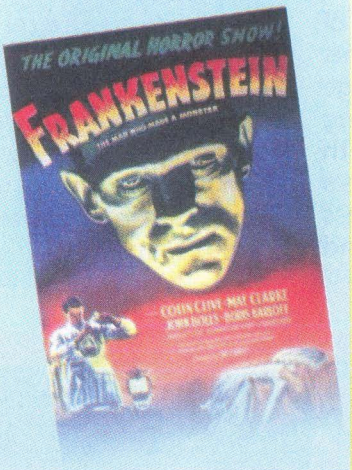
Mary Wollstonecraft

Mary was an inspiring teacher and an innovative educationalist, arguing for equal education for girls and boys. She drew out the spirit and curiosity of children without stifling them. Later, she

STAR FACT

Frankenstein

Mary had a daughter who was also named Mary. She married the poet Percy Shelley, and wrote the novel Frankenstein. This is the story of Victor Frankenstein, a scientist obsessed with his desire to penetrate the secret of life and create a 'perfect' creature - with terrifying results.



Jane Austen

Why is Jane Austen considered a great writer?

Jane Austen had a life long love of literature, and began writing at an early age. She was one of eight children of a clergyman, and grew up in a close-knit family. At 15, she was writing plays and sketches for the amusement of her family, and by the time she was 21, she had begun to write novels that are among the finest in English literature. Her books, set among the English middle and upper

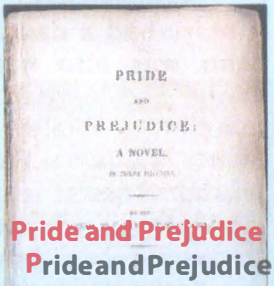
created a career for herself as a writer, one of the first women to do so, starting off with reviews and translations. For a long time, Mary supported her parents, brothers and sisters with the money she earned from her writing. She was truly a one woman revolution in herself!

classes, are notable for their wit, social observation and insights into the lives of early 19th century women.

Jane's first novel, 'Sense and Sensibility', appeared in 1811. Her next novel 'Pride and Prejudice', received highly favourable reviews. 'Mansfield Park' was published in 1814, then 'Emma' in 1816. In 1816, Jane began to suffer from ill-health, and she died a year later. Two more of her novels, 'Persuasion' and 'Northanger Abbey' were published after her death, and a final novel was left incomplete.

Jane Austen is considered one of the best woman authors of all time. Her homey realism was a change from the melodramatic fiction being written at the turn of the eighteenth century. Her writing is described as a comedy of manners in middle-class England, and her works were, and still are, hugely popular.

STAR FACT


PRIDE
AND
PREJUDICE:
A NOVEL.

Pride and Prejudice

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen was voted the best British novel of all time in a BBC poll. Many feature films and television serials have been made on this masterpiece which remains as popular today as it has been in the centuries since it was written.

Why is Harriet Beecher Stowe's work so important?

Harriet Beecher Stowe was born in Connecticut, U.S.A., into a large family. She was named after her aunt, Harriet Foote, who influenced deeply her thinking, especially with her strong belief in cul-

Harriet Beecher

Why is Queen Victoria so famous?

Queen Victoria was only 18, when she came to the throne of Britain, and she reigned for 64 years. In fact, she ruled for so long that her reign became known as the Victorian era.

Queen Victoria

At the age of 21, Victoria married her cousin, Albert of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, a German Prince. Victoria had nine children, 40 grand-children and 37 great-grandchildren, scattered all over Europe. Most of Queen Victoria's children married into other royal families of Europe.

Whilst Victoria was queen, there was a tremendous change in the lives of British people: Britain became the most powerful country in the world, with the largest empire that had ever existed, ruling a quarter of the world's population.

The number of people living in Britain more than doubled, causing a huge demand for food, clothing and housing. As a result, factories and machines were built to meet this demand, and new towns grew up,

ture. In 1834, Stowe began her literary career when she won a prize contest of the Western Monthly Magazine. Soon, Stowe was a regular contributor of stories and essays. Her first book, 'The Mayflower', appeared in 1843.

Stowe published over 30 books, but her most famous book is undoubtedly the children's book 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'. It is the story of a pious slave called Uncle Tom, and Stowe's book is very important, because it showed the nation how cruel the system of slavery was. Uncle Tom's Cabin became an instant best seller, and millions of copies of the book have been sold.

changing the landscape and the ways people lived and worked. Railways, originally built to transport goods, now enabled people to travel easily around the country for the first time. In short, Queen Victoria oversaw huge changes in British society ... is it any wonder that she gave her name to an age?

Why is Princess Olga remembered to this day?

Saint Olga

Princess Olga lived between 890 and 969, and was the first female Russian ruler. For almost twenty years, she ruled Kievan Rus. Her very first act as a ruler was to take bloody revenge against the Drevlians, the people who had killed her husband, Prince Igor. Olga took revenge on the Drevlians by having their envoys killed, and their towns burned. She then abolished the annual tribute-collecting journeys made by the Kievan princes, and replaced it with a uniform system of taxation and special government tax-collectors.

Princess Olga's son was only three years old, when his father died. So, Olga ruled the country in his name, with the full support of the army. She was a very active ruler who travelled incessantly around the country, trying to improve life in her realm. Around 957,

A Great Escape

Did you know that Queen Victoria survived eight assassination attempts? All the attempts were by shooting- but she escaped every time, and was injured only once. Most of her assassins were judged to be insane. Her assassins were imprisoned, but none was put to death or flogged.

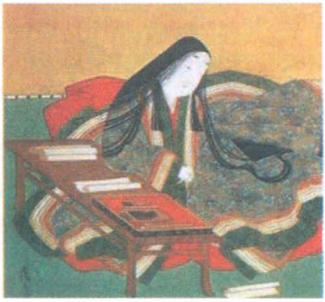
STAR FACT

Olga travelled to Constantinople and was baptized in the Christian faith, under the sponsorship of the Byzantine emperor. Her baptism did not lead to the conversion of her people, but established the Eastern Orthodox Church in Russia.

In fact, she was the very first ruler of Kiev who converted to Christianity. The Orthodox Church proclaimed Olga a saint. Did you know that the name 'Olga' actually means 'a saint'? So it seems as though she was destined to become one from the time she was named!

Why is Murasaki Shikibu's book 'The Tale of Genji' considered to be a masterpiece?

Murasaki Shikibu is one of Japan's best known writers. In fact, many consider her to be the world's first modern novelist. Her book, 'The Tale of Genji', is the world's first psychological novel, and one of the longest, and most dis-



Murasaki Shikibu

tinguished masterpieces of Japanese literature.

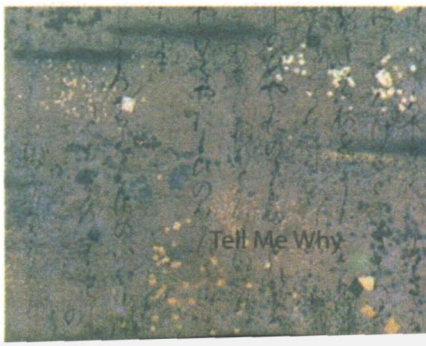
When she was in her early twenties, Murasaki was married to a distant relative. Her only daughter was born in 999. After the death of her husband in 1001 AD, knowing of her writing talent and her brilliant mind, the imperial family brought Lady Murasaki to court. While at the court, she kept a dairy that gives us vivid insights into life in the imperial court.

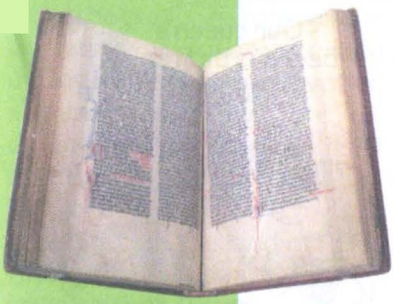
'The Tale of Genji' is loosely based on her years as lady-in-waiting to the Empress Akiko. It is a very long novel about complications in the life of a fictitious prince called Genji. Like many of the court ladies, Shikibu was a master at observing the daily activities and attitudes of upper class society. Among the novel's chief delights are the portraits of the women in Prince Genji's life. These women are individually described, with their aristocratic refinements, talents in the arts of music and poetry, and love for the beauties of nature. As the work nears its conclusion, the tone becomes more mature and somber, shaded by Buddhist judgments on the fleeting joys of earthly existence. The novel has been translated into many languages and been studied through the ages.

The Tale of the Genji

'The Tale of Genji' is a Japanese epic that is divided into 54 books or episodes. The action covers the better part of a century, with over 400 characters spanning four generations. The hero, Hikaru Genji or the Shining One, seeks love and happiness driven by the haunting image of his dead mother. Because of his exuberant personality Genji becomes very popular. But the novel that begins with the enchanting atmosphere of a fairy tale ends in the most complex psychological analysis of unhappy people shrouded in blackest gloom.

A written text from the earliest handscroll of the Tale of Genji





Trotulas de ornata - A Book Written by Trota

Why are the contributions of Trotula significant?

Trota, who is also known as Trotula, lived sometime in the eleventh century in Salerno in Southern Italy. At that time, Salerno was famous for its hospitals, and the first medical school was established there. Many women were trained as physicians, and were professors of medicine.

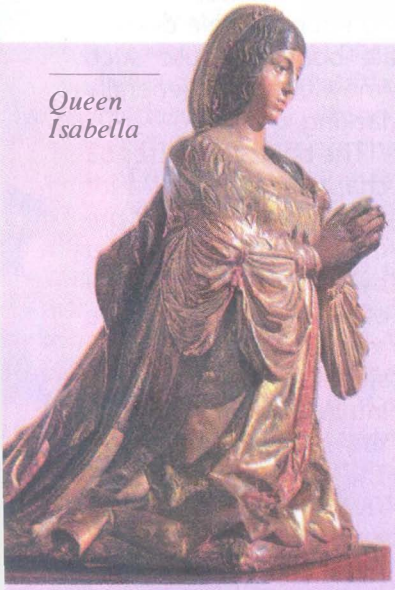
Trotula was one of the most famous physicians of that time. Her main interest was to alleviate the suffering of women. She was the author of many medical works, including a book on the diseases of women. She wrote it to educate male doctors about the female body, because such knowledge was generally lacking.

Trota

The book comprises 63 chapters, and gives a lot of information about the medical problems faced by women. The majority of the remedies that she recommends are herbs, spices, and oils. Her work influenced physicians in the centuries to come. There is no doubt that Trotula was instrumental in bringing about a change in society due to her scientific revelations.

Why is Hatshepsut unique?

Hatshepsut was the first wife, and Queen of Thutmose II. When he died, she proclaimed herself Pharaoh, denying the old king's son his inheritance. Hatshepsut was a very unique and intelligent individual. She used various strategies to legitimize her position as pharaoh. She claimed God told her to rule as the king, and so she took on several male adornments while she ruled Egypt. Unlike most women of that time, she attached a false beard, wore male clothing, and was depicted in statutes as a pharaoh, and not as a queen.



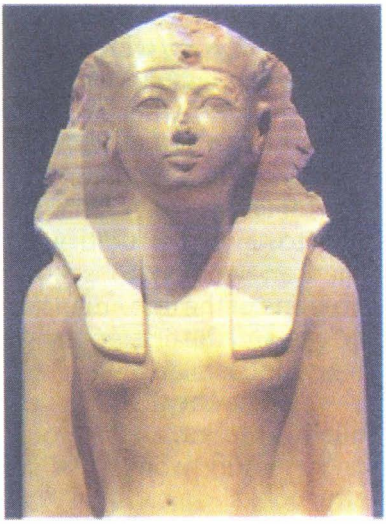
Queen Isabella

Why is Queen Isabella famous?

Queen Isabella was the Queen of Castile, who, along with her husband, King Ferdinand of Aragon, financed Christopher Columbus' expedition to the Indies, which resulted in the discovery of America. She was the half sister of Henry IV, who succeeded to the Castilian throne in 1454. Henry had recognized Isabella as his heir, but when she married Ferdinand of Aragon in 1469, Henry conferred the succession on his daughter. This led to a civil war when Henry died.

Hatshepsut remained in power for twenty years, and during this time the Egyptian economy flourished. She ordered the army to make itself useful, not by going to battle, but by setting off on a trading expedition to the land of Punt, where no Egyptian had been for more than 500 years.

The expedition was an enormous success, and enhanced Hatshepsut's reputation. She became known as the ruler who had reached out to foreign countries, and who had delivered to the Egyptians marvellous wonders from far away.



Hatshepsut

The civil war ended with Isabella's victory in 1479, the year in which Ferdinand became king of Aragón. Isabella and Ferdinand ruled Castile and Aragón jointly, and their reign in effect, marked the beginning of the unified Spanish kingdom. Isabella confiscated the lands of many rich people. She also took over the administration of the holdings of the powerful religious military orders, and was a prime mover in the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, the conquest of Granada, and the forced conversion of the Moors. In what was Isabel's last decade, she acquired paintings and tapestries by Flemish masters and devotional books from the new printing presses, to bring the Renaissance to Spain too.

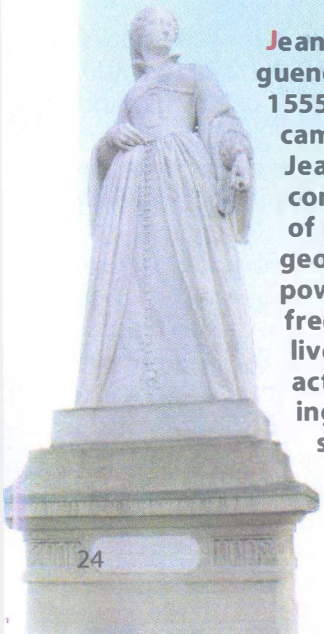
With the discovery of America, thanks to Isabella's courage and foresight in giving Columbus the funds for his venture, Spain began its rise to greatness. Under Isabella's guidance, Spain's army and navy became strong, trade flourished, and Spain became a world power.

Why was Judith Sargent Murray an extraordinary woman?

Judith Sargent Murray was an eighteenth-century writer known for her essays on education for women, on equality, and on economic independence for all people. She has a series of 'firsts' to her name. Judith was the first American woman to self-publish a book, one of the first American writers of plays, and the first woman to have a play produced on stage in America. She was also the first to claim female equality in print, and the only eighteenth century woman to have kept 'letter books' in a consistent manner.

In 1773 or 1774, at about the age of twenty-three, Judith decided to start

Judith Sargent Murray



Jeanne d' Albret

Jeanne d' Albret was a key leader in the Huguenot party in France in the 16th century. In 1555, Jeanne's father died, and Jeanne became ruler of Navarre in her own right. Jeanne declared, on Christmas of 1560, her conversion to the reformed faith. In spite of pressures from all quarters, she courageously stuck to her faith, maintained her power, and determinedly fought for the freedom of people from different faiths to live peacefully together. Jeanne always acted according to her conscience, fulfilling her duties as a queen, and her responsibilities as a mother who had to bring up a future king.

Jeanne d' Albret

STAR FACT

The Gleaner

Judith Sargent Murray self published a collection of her works in 1798. It was titled 'The Gleaner'. This three volume book of essays established her as a leading author and intellectual, and also as an advocate for women's rights.

making copies of the letters she sent to family, friends, political leaders, and business acquaintances. As a self-taught student of history, she knew the importance of documentation. She understood that momentous political and intellectual changes were taking place. And so, she began to create what would become twenty volumes of letters-left behind for future generations. She was, without doubt, a remarkable person, and one of America's earliest champions of female equality, education, economic independence, and political engagement.

Sophie Germain

Why is Sophie Germain considered to be a revolutionary?

Sophie Germain was born in an era of revolution. In the year of her birth, the American Revolution began. Thirteen years later, the French Revolution began in her own country. She herself became a revolutionary mathematician, number theorist, and mathematical physicist.

When Sophie Germain was 13, her parents kept her isolated from the turmoil of the French Revolution by keeping her in the house. She fought boredom by reading from her father's extensive library. It is said that she read the story of Archimedes of Syracuse who was reading geometry as he was

killed - and she decided to commit her life to a subject that could so absorb one's attention. After discovering geometry, Sophie Germain taught herself mathematics, and also Latin and Greek so that she could read the classical mathematics texts.

Calling herself M. Le Blanc, Sophie corresponded with many mathematicians and 'M. Le Blanc' began to have an impact in turn on them. She gave herself a man's name, because she felt that a woman's views on Mathematics would not be taken seriously. However, even when it was discovered that M. Le Blanc was a woman, leading mathematicians continued to correspond with her.

Before 1808, Germain mainly worked in number theory. Then she became interested in Chladni figures, patterns produced by vibration, and won a prize for a paper on that subject. This work laid the foundation to the applied mathematics used in the construction of skyscrapers today, and was important at the time to the new field of mathematical physics, especially to the study of acoustics and elasticity.

Sophie Germain was, without doubt, a revolutionary, for she battled against the social prejudices of the era, and a lack of formal training in order to become a celebrated mathematician.

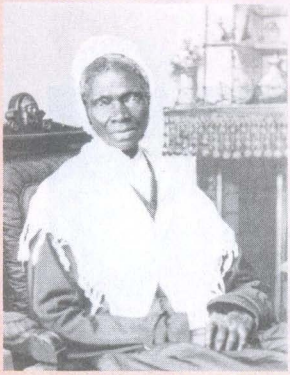
Olympe de Gouges

Why was Olympe de Gouges executed?

Olympe de Gouges was born to working class parents, but took her place amidst the French intellectuals who advocated the French Revolution. She was a popular playwright, and she strongly advocated the rights of French women. She spoke for not only herself, but many of the women of France, when in 1791 she wrote and published the 'Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Citizen'.

Why is Sojourner Truth remembered till today?

Sojourner Truth was a woman of remarkable intelligence despite her illiteracy. She was born a slave, and her real name was Isabella Baumfree. She was sold several times before slavery was abolished in 1827 in New York.



Sojourner Truth

Inspired by religion, Truth transformed herself from a domestic servant named Isabella into a powerful preacher named Sojourner Truth. She had great presence. She was tall- some 5 feet 11 inches in height. Her voice was low, and her singing voice was marvellous. Whenever she spoke in public, she also sang. No one ever forgot the power of Sojourner Truth's singing, just as her wit and originality of phrasing were also memorable. She became an outspoken advocate of women's rights as well as blacks' rights. Truth became a national symbol for strong black women, indeed, for all strong women, and her words have inspired black women and poor people all over the world to this day.

Olympe asserted that woman was not simply the same as man, but that she was his equal partner, and so, she should enjoy the same rights as man. Unfortunately, Olympe was too far ahead of her times. For asserting this equality, and repeating the assertion publicly, Olympe de Gouges was arrested in July 1793, four years after the Revolution. She was sent to the guillotine in November of that year.

STAR FACT

Dorothea Dix

Dorothea Dix

Dorothea Dix did more than anyone else of her generation to improve the lives of mentally ill people in America. In 1841, she volunteered to hold a devotional hour for women in the East Cambridge jail, and was aghast to discover that some of the tattered inmates were chained in a filthy, cold cell simply because they were mentally ill. Dix then devoted her life to improving conditions for the mentally ill. She travelled more than 30,000 miles over a three-year period to spur legislators into doing the right thing for the mentally ill. She became Superintendent of Female Nurses during the Civil War, and after the war, resumed travel throughout the United States and Europe on behalf of the mentally ill. By 1880, Dix had had a direct hand in founding 32 of 123 mental hospitals in the country.

Why is Harriet Martineau's life inspiring?

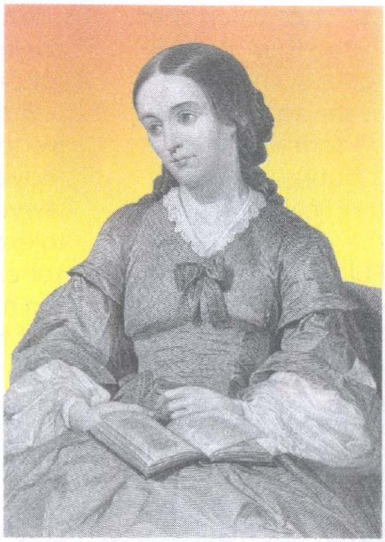
Harriet Martineau is an inspiration for women with multiple disabilities. She suffered from ill heath, a number of disabilities, and deep childhood unhappiness. Still she became a major intellectual force of her day. Not only was she a scholarly success, but she exerted a strong social force to improve the status of women and the poor.

From an early age, Harriet suffered from various weaknesses. She had no sense of smell or taste, and later, became deaf too. Her family became very poor after the death of her father, and a man of whom she was very fond of, died. In spite of all these setbacks, she wrote extensively on female education and women's rights, and

on economics and politics. She published devotional exercises and addresses, prayers and hymns, and also stood up for the poor, and spoke up against slavery.

Harriet developed a wide circle of friends and acquaintances. Writers from abroad, such as Erasmus, praised her work. Amazingly, she underwent a course of treatment that completely cured her of all her ailments. Some of her books became best sellers, thus solving all her financial difficulties as well. Now don't you agree that her life is truly an inspiration to everyone?

Harriet Martineau



Margaret Fuller

Why is Margaret Fuller considered to be an extraordinary woman?

Margaret Fuller was America's first true feminist. She was also a social reformer, critic, and teacher whose words enriched the lives of many people. Margaret received a good classical education, which was very unusual for a young girl at that time.

As an adult, Margaret Fuller worked as a teacher, and felt the need to give public lectures. As there were local laws against women giving public addresses,

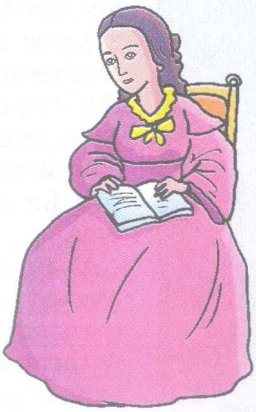
es, she billed her lectures as 'conversations', and in 1839, at the age of 29, began offering them at a bookshop in Boston. For two years, in the early 1840's, Fuller was the editor of, the magazine 'The Dial'. It was in the pages of The Dial that she published one of her significant early feminist works, 'The Great Lawsuit: Man vs. Men, Woman vs. Women'.

Margaret later became a book reviewer and correspondent for the New York Tribune. She worked for the Tribune from 1844 to 1846, often writing about reformist ideas such as improving conditions in prisons. In 1846, she became the first female foreign correspondent in America. Fuller published several books,

Why Elizabeth Cady Stanton is considered one of the most remarkable women in American history?

Elizabeth Cady Stanton played a leadership role in the women's rights movement. She was the daughter of a lawyer, and she showed early her desire to excel in intellectual and other 'male' spheres. In 1840, Elizabeth Cady Stanton married a reformer Henry Stanton, and they went at once to the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London, where she joined other women in objecting to the fact that they were not allowed into the assembly.

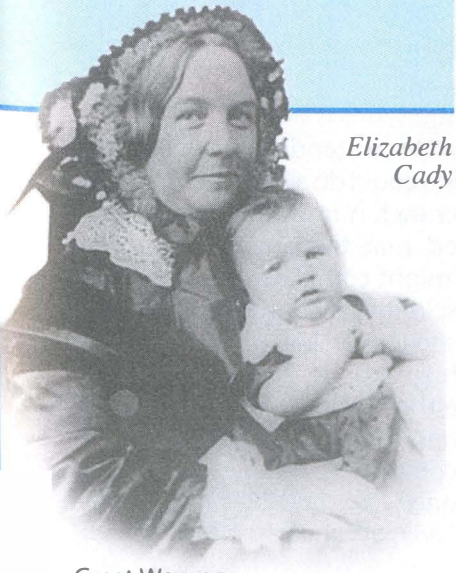
Elizabeth was for many years the architect and author of the movement's most important strategies and documents. Along with other women, she took the lead in proposing that women be granted the right to vote. She con-



and edited a magazine before dying tragically at the age of 40. Her writings and the conduct of her life served as an inspiration to later advocates for women's rights, for she was a feminist at a time when the role of women in society was severely limited.

tinued to write and lecture on women's rights and other reforms of the day, including the right to divorce.

During the Civil War, Elizabeth Cady Stanton concentrated her efforts on abolishing slavery, but afterwards, she became even more outspoken in promoting the right to vote for women. She travelled widely to give lectures and speeches. Elizabeth Cady Stanton died on October 26th, 1902, and was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable individuals in American history.



Elizabeth Cady

Ada Lovelace

Why is Ada Lovelace considered the founder of scientific computing?

Ada Lovelace was one of the most picturesque characters in computer history. She was the daughter of the poet Lord Byron, and her mother, who did not want her to become a poet like her father, brought her up to be a mathematician and scientist.

She wrote a scientific pa-

Ada Lovelace - A Portrait

STAR FACT

Computer Language

Ada Lovelace had designed a method of using punch cards that has made her the world's first computer programmer. Do you know that in 1980, the US Department of Defence named their computer language 'Ada' in honour of this remarkable woman?

per in 1843 that anticipated the development of computer software, artificial intelligence, and computer music. She wrote the world's first computer programmes for the Analytical Engine, a general-purpose machine that Charles Babbage had invented. The calculations were never carried out, as the machine was never built. She also wrote the very first description of a computer, and of software.

Understanding that computers could do a lot more than just crunch numbers, Ada suggested that the analytical engine 'might compose elaborate and scientific pieces of music'. Sadly, she never had the chance to fully explore the possibilities of either Babbage's inventions or her own understanding of computing, for she died, aged only 36, on 27th November 1852, of cancer.

Lucy Stone

Why is Lucy Stone considered a pioneer in several fields?

Lucy Stone was an American reformer, who was a pioneer in the movement for women's rights. In her lifetime, she achieved a number of important 'firsts' for which we can remember her. She was the first woman in Massachusetts to earn a college degree, and the first woman in the United States to keep her own name after marriage.

A year after she graduated, Lucy Stone was hired as an organizer of the American Anti-Slavery Society. In this paid position, she travelled giving speeches on abolition. She included speeches, as well, on women's rights. Her speeches drew large crowds, and also provoked much hostility.

In 1855, Stone married Henry B. Blackwell, a man who was also active in the anti slavery movement. During the marriage service, they pledged that both partners would have absolutely equal rights in marriage. In protest against the laws that discriminated against women, Stone retained her own name. Over the next twenty years, Stone edited a feminist weekly magazine, and wrote a large number of leaflets on voting rights for women.

Lucy Stone died in Dorchester, Massachusetts, on 18th October, 1893. She even achieved a 'first' at death, by being the first person in New England to be cremated!

Why are the Bronte Sisters so famous?

The Bronte Sisters, Charlotte, Emily and Anne, have charmed, inspired, and even shocked readers from the Victorian Age to the present. Raised in Haworth, Yorkshire, the three sisters produced such classics as Jane Eyre, Wuthering Heights, and The Tenant of Wildfell Hall.The characters in their books, such as the devoted governess, Jane Eyre, and the lovers, Heathcliff, Cathy, and Hareton, are unforgettable.

The Bronte sisters actually had a sad life. They were the children of a father who was both cold and violent, and of a gentle, sickly mother who died early. All three sisters attended different schools at various times as well as being taught at home. The Brontë children were often left alone together in their isolated home, and all began to write stories at an early age. In May 1846, the sisters published at their own expense a volume of poetry. Anne's 'Agnes Grey' and Charlotte's 'Jane Eyre' were published in 1847. 'Jane Eyre' was one of the year's best sellers. Anne's second novel, 'The Tenant of Wildfell Hall'

The Bronte Sisters - Anne, Emily and Charlotte

and Emily's 'Wuthering Heights' were both published in 1848.

The Bronte sisters were reared amid gloomy surroundings, and perhaps this is the reason that their stories deal with suffering and endurance, rebellion against fate, violence, and with crime and its punishment.

Why did Marian Evans write under the pen name of George Eliot?

George Eliot was the pen name of Mary Ann Evans, one of the leading English novelists of the 19th century. She used a male pen name to ensure her works were taken seriously in an era when female authors were usually associated with romantic novels. As a child, Mary Ann studied Latin, Greek, Italian, French, and German. She also became a skilled pianist. Later, when she became an author, she used the name 'George Eliot'. In 1850, Eliot began contributing to the 'Westminster Review', a leading journal for philosophical radicals, and later became its editor.

There is no doubt that George Eliot became one of the greatest authors of the 19th century.

George Eliot

Her chief works are 'Adam Bede', 'The Mill on the Floss,' 'Silas Marner,' 'Romola', 'Felix Holt', 'Middlemarch,' 'Daniel Deronda', and 'Theophrastus Such'. Her novels, most famously 'Middlemarch', are celebrated for their realism and psychological insights.

Why was Harriet Tubman known as the 'Moses of her people'?

Harriet Tubman was born around 1820 in Maryland in the United States. Her parents were slaves, so she also was a slave when she was born. However, she escaped slavery in 1849, and travelled to the north of her country. She then became a conductor for the Underground Railroad, and helped slaves flee to freedom in the North. The Underground Railroad was a secret system of people of all races who helped slaves escape to the North-it was not an actual railroad at all.

Harriet Tubman made 19 dangerous rescue

trips over 10 years, rescuing over 300 slaves from Southern states. During the Civil War, Harriet Tubman served with the U.S. Army in South Carolina, as a nurse, scout, spy and soldier. She led the Combahee River expedition, under the command of James Montgomery, and helped to blow up Southern supply lines and free hundreds of slaves.

After the war ended, Harriet spoke for the rights of women and African Americans. She helped to organize the AME or African Methodist Episcopal Church, and also set up a home for poor aged African Americans. An incredibly brave woman, she was known as the 'Moses of her people,' because she devoted her life to fighting slavery, helping slaves and ex-slaves, and championing the rights of women.

Harriet Tubman

STAR FACT

Underground Railroad

The Underground Railroad was an escape route for slaves. Since escaping slaves and the people who helped them were technically breaking the law, they had to stay out of sight. They went 'underground' in terms of concealing their actions. Many clever and creative ideas helped slaves during their escape. On one occasion, 28 slaves escaped, pretending to be part of a funeral procession following a hearse! A hearse is a vehicle for carrying a dead body to the church or cemetery.

Why was Florence Nightingale called 'the lady with the lamp'?

Florence Nightingale is known as the founder of modern nursing. She was the daughter of a well-to-do family in England. She was born in Florence, Italy on 12 May 1820. By the time she was 12, she was determined to

Nightingale Receiving the Wounded at Scutari-A Portrait

'do something worthwhile'. She wanted to look after the sick, and used every spare minute to learn from nursing books she had secretly obtained. She also visited hospitals in London, and the surrounding area.

Her parents tried to get her to change her mind, but she was adamant about becoming a nurse. She was an excellent student, and after her graduation, she returned to London,

Pet Owl

Florence Nightingale loved animals, and surrounded herself with an array of pets from tortoises to chameleons and cats. But her favourite was a little owl called Athena, whom she rescued from stone-throwing youths in Athens in 1850 while returning from Egypt. She kept it with her night and day until it died four years later as she prepared to go the Crimean War. The owl was later stuffed, and today the stuffed Athena can be seen at the Florence Nightingale Museum in Central London.

Florence Nightingale

and got a job running a hospital.

During the Crimean War, she was put in charge of nursing. She went to the battlefield with 38 nurses, cleaned up the huge, dirty old building that served as a hospital, and managed somehow or the other to get urgently needed supplies. Through her efforts, thousands of lives were saved. At night, she would visit the sick and the injured, carrying a lamp, and so she became known as 'the lady with the lamp'. She will always be remembered for the fact that she changed the face of nursing from a mostly untrained profession to a highly skilled and well-respected medical profession, with very important responsibilities.

A Florence Nightingale Statue in London

STAR FACT

International Nurses' Day

International Nurses' Day is celebrated each year on May 12th as it is the anniversary of the birth of Florence Nightingale. Each year on May 12th, a special service is held in Westminster Abbey in London. During the service, a symbolic lamp is taken from the Nurses' Chapel in the Abbey and handed from one nurse to another, and then up to the Dean, who places it on the high altar. This signifies the passing of knowledge from one nurse to another, and is also a tribute to Florence Nightingale's nickname, 'the lady with the lamp'.

An Unsung Nightingale

Mary Seacole was a pioneering nurse and heroine of the Crimean War, who, as a woman of mixed race, overcame a double prejudice. Her father was a Scottish soldier, and her mother a Jamaican. Mary learned her nursing skills from her mother, who kept a boarding house for invalid soldiers. She later complemented her knowledge of traditional medicine with European medical ideas. She funded her own trip to the Crimea where she visited the battlefield, sometimes under fire, to nurse the wounded, and became known as 'Mother Seacole'.

Mary Seacole

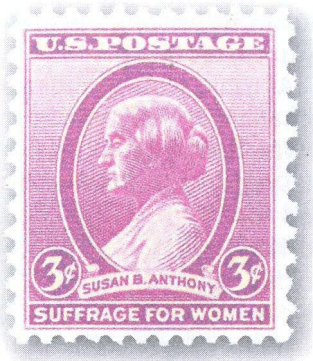
Why is Susan B. Antony considered a truly great woman?

Susan B. Antony was America's foremost champion of women's rights. She was born into a Quaker family in Massachusetts. The family was opposed to slavery, and her father avoided purchasing cotton for his mill which had been raised by slave labour. Susan was involved in many causes. She joined the movement which sought to prohibit the production of alcohol and its consumption. She also became interested in the Women's Rights movement. At that time, women could not own property, or vote.

Susan B. Antony

Susan was instrumental in the passage of the Married Women's Property Bill in New York which stated that a woman had the right to hold property, carry on a trade, and collect and use her own earnings.

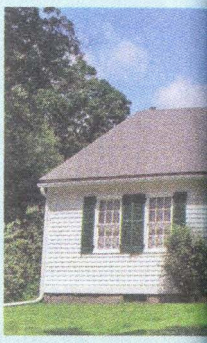
Susan started petitions to outlaw slavery. Over time, she obtained 400,000 signatures. In April 1864, the Thirteenth Amendment which abol-



A Postage Stamp Honouring Susan B. Antony

ished slavery passed the Senate. With some financial help, Susan started a newspaper 'The Revolution,' to promote a woman's right to vote. The publication not only sought to promote the vote for women, but to establish justice for all, who were oppressed.

Susan longed to see women voting throughout the world, but when she died in 1906, just one month after her 86th birthday, this dream had only been realized in Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and Idaho, and far away in New Zealand and Australia.

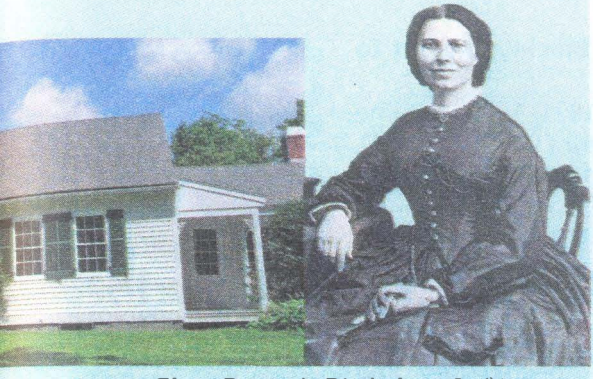


Why is Clara Harlowe Barton associated with The American Red Cross?

Clara Barton is best known as the founder of the American Red Cross. She began a lifetime of helping others at the beginning of the Civil War, when she organized medical care for wounded soldiers.

Clara was a school teacher. But, when the Civil War began, she accompanied the U.S. Army as it marched and fought in Virginia, nursing the wounded soldiers at great risk to her own life. In one battle, a bullet passed through the sleeve of her dress, killing the wounded man she was helping.

Her efforts to bring better medical care, and to help locate missing servicemen, laid the groundwork for her future role as the founder and leader of the American Red Cross, which she began in 1881. On a trip to Europe, she learned of the International Red Cross, an organization to which the United States did not belong. Observing Red Cross volunteers at work with the wounded during the 1870-1871 Franco-Prussian War, she saw the



Clara Barton's Birthplace(Left), Clara Barton(Right)

need for the United States to form its own branch of the Red Cross. One feature of the U.S. Red Cross that she added was the idea of Red Cross assistance in times of natural disasters, such as hurricanes and floods.

American Red Cross Headquarters

Good Friends

Elizabeth Stanton and Susan Antony were introduced to each other in 1851, and they became lifelong friends. In the years following the Civil War, they were among those who were determined to focus on female voting rights since only men had the right to vote. They founded the National Woman Suffrage Association, and Elizabeth served as its president. Elizabeth was married and mother to a number of children. She served as the writer and idea-person of the team. Susan, who never married, was more often the organizer. She was the one who traveled, spoke widely, and bore the brunt of hostile public opinion.

Why did Elizabeth Blackwell want to become a doctor?

Elizabeth Blackwell (1821- 1910) became the first woman in America to earn the M.D. degree. She supported medical education for women, and helped many other women's careers. She claimed that, she turned to medicine after a close friend who was dying suggested she would have been spared her worst suffering, if her physician had been a woman.

Elizabeth Blackwell

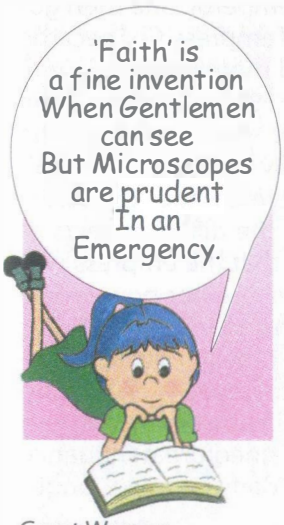
Elizabeth had no idea how to become a physician, so she consulted with several physicians known to her family. She convinced two physician friends to let her read medicine with them for a year, and applied to all the medical schools in New York and Philadelphia. They all rejected her, but finally, she was accepted by The Geneva Medical College in New York, in 1847. The faculty, thought that that the all-male student body would never agree to a woman joining their ranks, and allowed the students to vote on her admission. As a joke, they voted 'yes', and she gained admittance! On the morning of Tuesday, January 23rd, 1849, Elizabeth received from the hands of the President of The Geneva Medical College, a diploma conferring upon her the degree of Doctor of Medicine. Thus, after many years of determined effort, Elizabeth Blackwell became the first woman to complete a course of study at a medical college, and receive the M.D. degree. In 1875, she was appointed Professor of Gynaecology at the London School for Medicine For Children, and she remained there until she retired in 1907 after a serious fall.

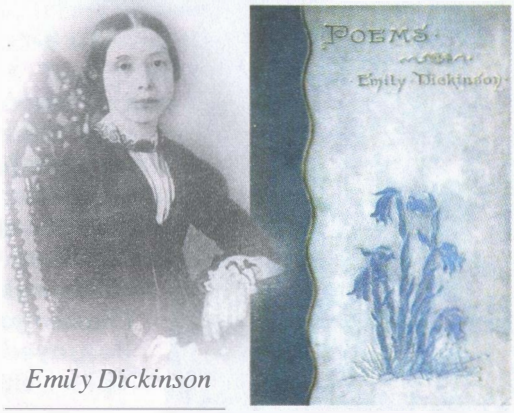
An Elizabeth Blackwell Postage Stamp

Why does Emily Dickinson have a unique place among American poets?

Emily Dickinson was born in Amherst, Massachusetts in 1830. She was the finest women poet in America, in the 19th century. She wrote in short stanza form, and simple rhyme.

Regarded as one of America's greatest poets, Emily is also well known for her unusual life of simplicity and seclusion. As a young child,

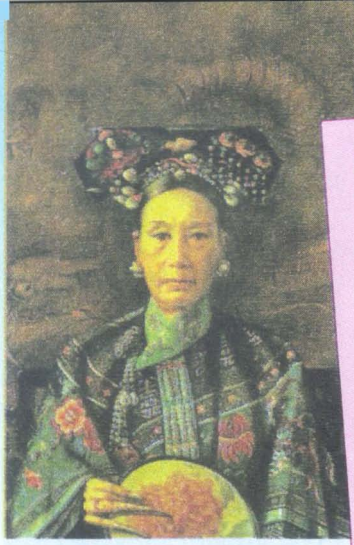




Emily Dickinson

Emily proved to be a bright and conscientious student. She was able to create many original writings of rhyming stories, delighting her fellow classmates. Emily was both a keen artist, and accomplished musician. In her college years, she enjoyed singing, and also had a sharp eye for beautiful art and bright colours. Emily was also well read, choosing writers like Emerson, Thoreau, Dickens, John Ruskin, and nineteenth- century poets like the Brownings and the Bronte sisters.

As well as writing over 1,700 poems, Emily was a prolific letter writer. Her letters gave her the opportunity for contact with others. These letters reflect her love of language, which is seen in her poetry as well. She remained unmarried, with no children her whole life, though many people think she had a secret love. Very few of her poems were published during her life, most having been found in a dresser after her death.



Empress Dowager Cixi

STAR FACT

Opium Wars

The Opium Wars were actually two wars fought between Britain and China, in between 1839- 42 and 1856-60 . British traders were importing opium from India into China, against the wishes of the Chinese government. The Chinese destroyed a warehouse full of opium, and the British responded by sending a fleet of warships. This was the First Opium

Why is it said that the Empress Dowager Cixi contributed to the downfall of the Qing Dynasty?

Empress Dowager Cixi ruled over China for about a half a century, and was one of the most powerful women in the world at that time. She was born on the 29th of November 1885, as the daughter of an ordinary official. When she was sixteen, she was chosen to be a concubine- or one of the many wives- of the Emperor. The birth of a son gave her the maximum status possible in China. Cixi was elevated from total obscurity to the central political stage of China as a figure of unique importance to the survival of the dynasty.

In 1861, Emperor Hsien Feng died, and with that, Cixi's son became emperor. She then got the title of empress. Cixi became more and more powerful, until finally in 1865, she seized the throne. It was because, she masterfully maintained a balance between the conservatives and the different sects of the time, that the empress was able to ensure her power. She was a strong ruler, and put down the rebellions which endlessly threatened her. During her years in power, the Western nations gained great influence in China. Many people thought

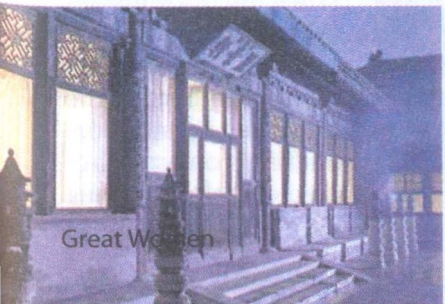
War that ended with the Treaty of Nanjing, and Britain getting control of Hong Kong. The second Opium War took place from 1856-1860, and began when Chinese officials boarded a British ship, and searched it. The French joined the British in sending an invasion force to China, and the city of Beijing was occupied before the conflict ended with a treaty. As a result of the Opium Wars, Britain's trade with China increased.

Dowager Cixi Sitting on Her Throne

that, the best way to stop the outsiders, from taking over completely was to strengthen China with modern inventions like trains and telegraphs. However, Empress Cixi and her advisors were conservative, and resisted these changes.

The empress usually put her own interests ahead of the nation's. She seized whatever she wanted by any means. She surrounded herself with money and banquets, jewels, and other luxuries. She was served 150 different dishes at a single banquet. She drank from a jade cup, and ate with golden chopsticks. She used navy funds to build herself a lavish summer palace. At the end of her life, her jewellery vault held 3,000 ebony boxes of her 'everyday jewels'. Her lavish lifestyle made the country poorer, and the military weaker, and was later responsible for the defeat of the war against Japan.

There is no doubt that Empress Dowager Cixi had a sharp political sense and decisive mind, but under her rule, the Qing Dynasty grew more and more corrupt, and lost its power.



Great Wo[illegible]en

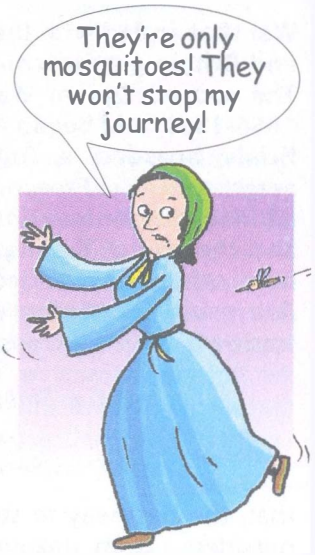
Dowager Cixi's Western Palace

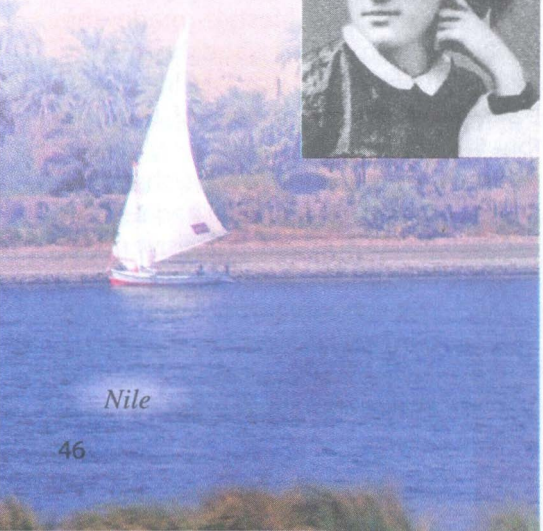
Why will Alexandrine Tinne be always remembered as a great explorer?

Alexandrine Tinne, who was born in 1839, was a Dutch explorer in Africa, and the first female to attempt to cross the Sahara. When Alexandrine was 19, she and her mother toured Egypt. Together they travelled by camel and donkey to the Red Sea, then later to the Holy Land and Damascus. The region was still considered dangerous, especially for female travellers. This particular journey, though gruelling, sparked a thirst for adventure in Alexandrine, and a desire to explore the region even further. She and her mother set out to explore the Nile, and reached Wadi Haifa, but were halted by a large waterfall.

Alexandrine Tinne

Alexandrine then set out on another expedition, accompanied by her mother and aunt. The three ladies hoped to see how far west the Nile basin extended. The journey was not an easy one for any of the travellers, and they were all particularly afflicted by tropical fevers. It is said that, they were bitten so extensively by mosquitoes that their faces swelled beyond recognition. Many members of the group fell ill, and Alexandrine's own mother died before they





Nile

Why was Elizabeth Garrett Anderson's life a distinguished one?

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson was the first woman officially approved to practice medicine in Great Britain, and was a pioneer in opening education in medicine to women.

Elizabeth Garret Anderson

In 1859, Garrett met Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman in America to graduate from a regular medical school. She was inspired by her to try and become a doctor too. However, she was told that, no medical school would accept her, so she started to work as a surgical nurse. She used the opportunity to attend surgical procedures, and gain some of the training given to medical students. At the end of her three-month trial period, she unofficially became a medical student. However, it was only after many setbacks and rejections that she managed to finally qualify and get her name on the medical register.

Garrett opened a dispensary for women in London, and also maintained a strong interest in the reform of education. After becoming England's first female doctor, the first female M.D. in France, the first female member of the British Medical Association and the first female dean of a medical school, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson also became Britain's first female mayor. Her life was truly a distinguished one!

reached Khartoum, in July 1864. Her aunt also died in Khartoum, and a heartbroken Alexandrine returned to Cairo.

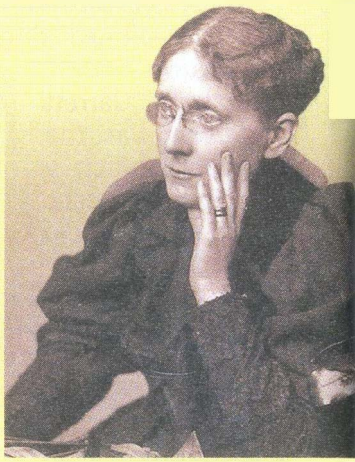
Alexandrine's ceaseless spirit of adventure pushed her onwards, and in 1869, she began a journey across the Sahara. Sadly, she could not reach her goal for she was murdered on the way. But she will always be remembered for her yearning to bring knowledge of regions unknown to the rest of the world... not as man or as a woman... but as a fearless explorer.

Why is Frances Willard considered a woman of many achievements?

Frances Willard was an educator, reformer, and suffragist. Do you know who a suffragist is? To put it simply, a suffragist is a person who fought for a woman's right to vote. She started her career by teaching at a variety of institutions for ten years. She went on a world tour with her friend Kate Jackson in 1868, and returned to Evanston to become head of North Western Female College.

By 1874, Willard's ideas had clashed with those of the university president, and she resigned. She then accepted the presidency of the Chicago Women's Christian Temperance Union. In 1874, temperance activism became the focus of her life. The temperance movement of the 19th century was an organized effort to fight against the consumption of intoxicating liquors, and its ill effects on the family, and society.

In addition to temperance, Frances Willard promoted women's rights, suffrage, equal pay for equal work, and an eight-hour day. She joined forces with the Prohibition Party and in 1890, plunged into the formation of a People's Party, but her foray into politics was not very successful. She will always be remembered as marvellous teacher, an excellent speaker, a successful lobbyist, and an expert in forming public opinion.



Frances Willard

A Statue of Frances Willard

Self Portrait by Mary Cassat

Why is Mary Cassat famous as a painter?

Mary Cassat was an American painter and printmaker. She lived much of her adult life in France. She followed a style of painting known as the Impressionist style, and her paintings reflected the social and private lives of women, with particular emphasis on the intimate bonds between mothers and children.

Mary Cassat's favorite subjects became children and women with children in ordinary scenes. Her paintings express a deep tenderness, and her own love for children. But she never had children of her own. Her big breakthrough came in 1892, when she received a commission for a mural for the Woman's Building at the Chicago World's Fair. Sadly, the mural painting got lost after the fair, and has not shown up until today.

Mary Cassatt was also an excellent printmaker. From 1890 to 1891, she made a series of ten colour prints, known as 'The Ten'. This series is considered as a landmark in Impressionist printmaking. She continued to make prints until 1896. It was

Boating Party-
A Painting by Mary Cassat

tragic that, this woman who loved colours and beauty should have poor eyesight- in fact, when she died at the age of 82, she was completely blind.

FRANCISCO

Emmeline Pankhurst

Why is it said that Emmeline Pankhurst changed the ideas of womanhood?

Emmeline Pankhurst and her husband Richard Pankhurst believed that women should have the same rights as men. In 1889, Emmeline founded the Women's Franchise League, which fought to allow married women to vote in local elections. In October 1903, she helped found the more militant Women's Social and Political Union or WSPU. Emmeline's daughters Christabel and Sylvia were both active in the cause. British politicians, the press and the

Why is Jane Addams considered a great social reformer?

Jane Adams was a Nobel Peace Prize winner and perhaps, the most famous social worker from the United States. As a young woman, Jane desperately wanted to make a difference in the world. She found her opportunity when she visited Toynbee Hall, the settlement house in London. It inspired her to start Hull House. Hull House's purpose was two-fold. Its primary purpose was to serve the poor inner city residents. Its other purpose was to give an outlet for educated, well to do

Jane Addams

public were astonished by the demonstrations, window smashing, arson and hunger strikes of the suffragettes, as the women who fought for their rights were called. Like many suffragettes, Emmeline was arrested on numerous occasions over the next few years, and went on hunger strike herself, resulting in violent force-feeding.

When World War I broke out in 1914, Emmeline turned her energies to supporting the war effort. In 1918, the Representation of the People Act gave voting rights to women over 30. After the war, Emmeline was chosen as the Conservative candidate for an East London seat, but her health failed before she could be elected. She died on 14th June in London, a few weeks after the Representation of the People Act establishing voting equality for men and women was passed. Emmeline Pankhurst was born a Victorian Englishwoman, but she shook society into a new pattern from which there could be no going back.

women to prove themselves useful to society. Hull House worked for social change, addressing such issues as child labour, public health reform, garbage collection, labour laws and race relations.

Jane believed women had a social responsibility to work for peace because, working men would never be against war. She took on a leadership role in the Woman's Peace Party. Jane had a heart attack in 1926. She never fully regained her health. As a matter of fact, she was being admitted to a Baltimore hospital on the very day on December 10, 1931, that the Nobel Peace Prize was being awarded to her in Oslo. True to her cause, Jane gave all her prize money away.

Jane Addams in 1915

Why is Ida Wells considered one of the forerunners of the Civil Rights Movement?

Ida Wells was born a slave in 1862, and was orphaned by the yellow fever epidemic of 1878. But

Ida Wells

somehow Ida Wells managed to get an education and become a teacher. Then, in 1884, she was forcibly removed from the first-class ladies coach on a railroad, and she filed a suit against the railroad. Though she first won the case and later lost it before the Memphis Supreme Court, the incident set off her career in journalism. She became the Memphis correspondent for African-American newspapers in Northern cities.

Ida's stories about the atrocities committed against the blacks made her a hero in the African American community, but angered white people in Memphis. She moved to New York, and launched an anti-lynching crusade. For the next several years, Ida Wells became one of America's most prolific writers and speakers

A Book by Ida Wells

about the lynchings that were happening with some regularity in the South.

Wells spoke all over the North, and on two occasions, conducted speaking tours of England. In the process, she had many admirers but, in an era where her candour was very unique, many critics as well.

In addition to being an active writer and speaker for her entire life, Ida also married and raised four children. Today, many people regard Ida - a journalist, activist, teacher, organizer and plaintiff- as one of the forerunners of the Civil Rights Movement.

Carrie Chapman Catt

Carrie Chapman Catt was a suffrage movement leader and the founder of the League of Women Voters. She became head of field organizing for the National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1895, and in 1900, having earned the trust of the leaders of that organization, became its president. Her leadership was the key in the final passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920. She was also one of the founders of the Women's Peace Party during World War I, and helped to organize the League of Women Voters after the passage of the 19th Amendment. She supported the League of Nations after World War I, and the founding of the United Nations after World War II. Between the wars, she worked for Jewish refugee relief efforts, and for child labour protection laws.

Carrie Chapman Catt

The Grave of Carrie Chapman Catt

Why is Mary Church Terrell to be admired?

Mary Church Terrell was an early civil rights advocate, an educator, an author, and a lecturer on woman suffrage and rights for African Americans. An early advocate of women's rights, Terrell was an active member of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, addressing in particular the concerns of black women. In 1896, she became the first president of the newly formed National Association of Coloured Women, an organization that under her leadership, worked to achieve educational and social reform, and an end to discriminatory practices. Appointed to the District of Columbia Board of Education in 1895, Terrell was the first black woman to hold such a position.

Mary was an articulate spokeswoman, efficient political organizer, and prolific writer. She addressed a wide range of social issues in her long career. Her last act as an activist was to lead a successful three-year struggle against segregation in public eating places and hotels in the nation's capital. Do you know what segregation is? It is the forced separation of a race in a community or country. In those days, segregation existed in many parts of the USA, and coloured people were kept separate from the whites in public places. This unfair system was finally abolished thanks to the work of brave people like Mary.

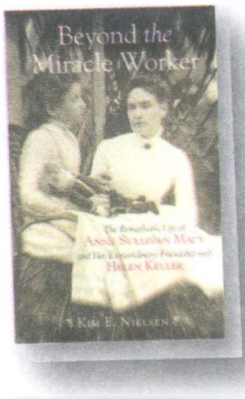
Mary Church Terrell

Why is it said that Ann Sullivan Macy played a key role in Helen Keller's achievements?

Anne Sullivan Macy overcame poverty and blindness to obtain an education, which in turn, enabled her to teach Helen Keller, who was both blind and deaf. Anne lost most of her sight at the age of seven, the result of an untreated bacterial infection known as trachoma. Soon after, her mother died, and her father abandoned her. Anne became a ward of the state, and was sent to a poorhouse. A chance encounter with a state official made it possible for her to attend the Perkins School for the Blind in Boston.

Ann Sullivan with Helen Keller

Anne threw herself into her studies at Perkins, and soon learnt to use a manual alphabet. When the Keller family contacted the school looking for an instructor for their blind and deaf daughter Helen, Anne's unique combination of knowledge and personal experience made her the



Ann Sullivan's Biography

STAR FACT

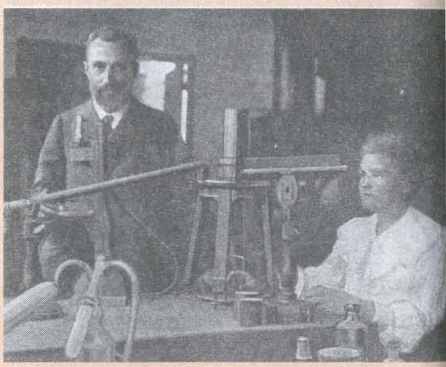
Curium

The element curium is named after Pierre and Marie Curie. Curium is primarily used for basic scientific research. It is a silvery-white radioactive metal. In fact, Curium is so radioactive that it glows purple in the dark.

Why is Marie Curie an icon in the world of science?

Marie Curie was one of the most famous women scientists in the world. Her parents were both school teachers, and they had high expectations from their children.

Marie chose to study physics, which is a branch of science that investigates the four forces at work in the universe, both on a large scale, as in the solar system, or on a small scale, as in at-



Pierre and Mary in Their Laboratory at Paris

ideal candidate. Anne taught Helen to read, write, sign and speak. Helen even went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Radcliffe College, and it was Anne who made it possible. She attended lectures with Helen, and spelled what the professors were saying into the palm of Helen's hand.

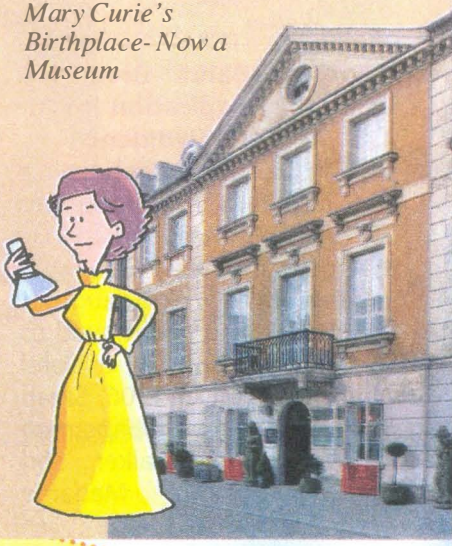
Helen Keller became world famous for the way she overcame her difficulties- and much of the credit for achievements must go to Anne- for if a student achieves extraordinary heights, it is sometimes because of an equally extraordinary teacher.

oms. The structure of the atom, and the forces which hold it together were still unknown when Marie enrolled as a student at the Sorbonne in 1891. Here she met and married Pierre Curie, who encouraged her to do research. With Pierre acting as her advisor, Marie spent several years purifying uranium ore. It was a gruelling task to isolate the 'radioactive' substances from tonnes of ordinary rock.

Marie proposed that the radiation came from inside the atoms. Other scientists followed her lead, and started to investigate the structure of atoms. She discovered two new elements which the Curies named radium -after 'radiation'- and polonium -after Poland. In 1903, the Curies and Henri Becquerel received the Nobel Prize in physics for their combined research and discoveries on radioactivity.

Marie Curie has become an icon and a role-model for other women to follow, for she was someone who succeeded-despite many difficulties,in carving a niche for herself in the world of science.

Mary Curie's Birthplace- Now a Museum



STAR FACT

Pierre, Irene and Marie

Nobel Prize Family

Pierre and Marie Curie won the Nobel Prize in 1903. Their eldest daughter, Irene Juliot Curie and her husband also won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1935. The Curies were truly a brilliant family!

Sara Breedlove Walker

MadamWalker and Friends in Her Car

Why is Sarah Breedlove Walker an inspiration for African American women?

Sarah Breedlove was born in a poor farm family on December 23, 1867, in Delta, Louisiana. By the age of nineteen, Sarah was a widow with a young daughter to support, and she moved to St. Louis to work as a hotel washerwoman. In 1906, Sarah married Denver newspaperman Charles Joseph Walker, and changed her name to Madame C.J. Walker.

Around 1910, Sarah came up with idea of straightening hair with a hot iron comb and an ointment to add softness and shine. It was an important development because for generations, black women had straightened tightly curled hair on ironing boards. This was sometimes harmful to the scalp and face and broke the hair. Sarah developed a variety of products to serve a range of hair care needs. She peddled them door to door, and then organized agents in 'Walker Clubs'. She opened a shop, trained assistants, and then later added mail-order sales, followed by a beauty school that taught the Walker Method of hair straightening and hair growing.

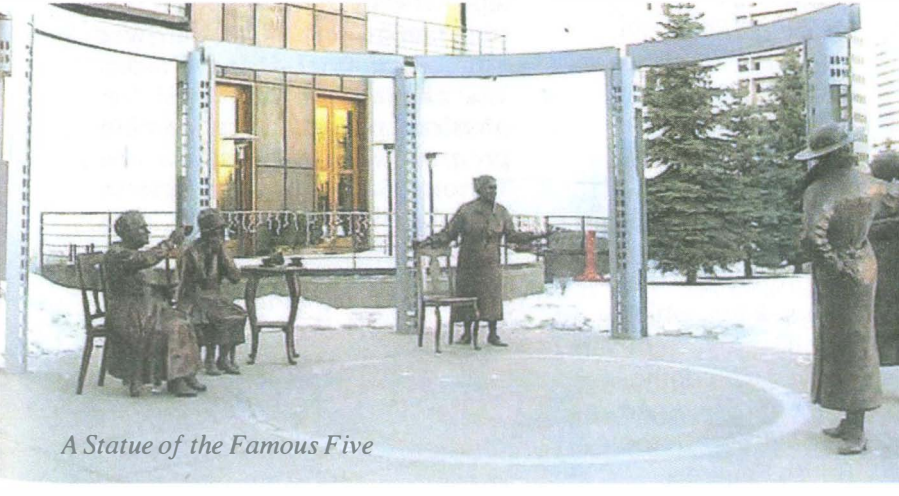
Her next step was to build a factory, and soon she was employing 3,000 workers in America's largest black-owned business. She became a social leader, and opened a hair care laboratory, and a chain of beauty salons in Harlem. Thus, a St. Louis washerwoman, created a cosmetic empire by inventing a system of hair straightening to become an inspiration for all African American women.

Why are Emily Murphy and the Famous Five so famous?

Emily Murphy was the first woman police magistrate in Alberta, in Canada, and in the British Empire. She was a strong advocate for the rights of women and children, and the leader of a group known as the Famous Five,

The Famous Five are five women, truly pioneers, who in Alberta in the early part of the 20th century, shaped the future of the lives of all Canadian women to come. They are Emily Murphy, Henrietta Muir Edwards, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby, and Nellie McClung. Because of their efforts, on October 18th, 1929, the Privy Council declared in the famous 'Person's Case of 1929' that women were persons, and thus eligible to hold any appointed or elected office. All the members of the Famous Five came from the upper-middle class, were well educated, and were committed to social change and women's

Emily Murphy



A Statue of the Famous Five

suffrage. They were social activists who felt it was their responsibility to make needed changes.

For Murphy, the Persons' Case was only one triumph in a lifetime of achievement. She combined family life with a writing career, and a wide variety of reform activities in the interests of women and children. Murphy was a member of the Canadian Women's Press, the National Council of Women, the Federated Women's Institutes, and 20 other organizations. But there is no doubt that it was the 'Persons' Case', fought by the Famous Five, which significantly improved the democratic life of women throughout the British Empire.

Rosa Luxemburg

Why is Rosa Luxemburg idolised by socialists?

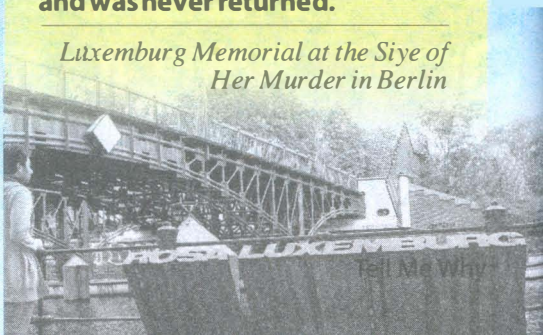
Rosa Luxemburg, who had a limp, had a brilliant mind. She gained a place in the best girl's school in Poland. Rosa co-founded the Social Democratic Party of Poland with Jogiches in 1893. Rosa was a

STAR FACT

Luxemburg's Namesake Tortoise

An annual tortoise race is held between Balliol and Trinity colleges at Oxford University. A tortoise named Rosa Luxemburg was a regular winner at these races. The official who organised her physical and ideological training program was known as Comrade Tortoise. Sadly Rosa, the tortoise was stolen from Balliol in 2003 and was never returned.

Luxemburg Memorial at the Siye of Her Murder in Berlin



Luxemburg Speaking to a Crowd

socialist. Socialism aims to give more power to the people. All her life, Rosa passionately believed in international socialism. Rosa left Zurich for Berlin 1898. There, she attacked German militarism, and her physical courage won widespread admiration. Between 1904 and 1906, she was imprisoned several times. In 1914, she produced her most famous work, 'The Accumulation of Capital'. She founded the German communist party with Liebknecht. They triggered the Spartacus uprising against the German government which was brutally crushed by the national militia, the Fierkorps. Rosa was murdered by the Fierkorps, and her body was thrown into a canal. Her life and her death inspired millions of socialists round the world.

How did Helena Rubinstein become one of the richest women in the world?

Helena Rubinstein made millions by selling make up. In fact, she laid the foundations of the beauty industry. She was bold, beautiful, and had a

Helena Rubinstein

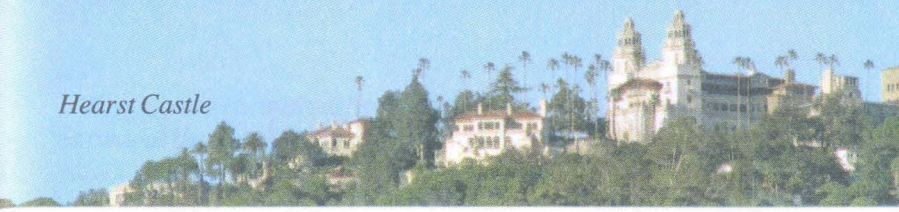
knack of spotting a business opportunity. Helena who was Polish by birth, visited her relatives in Australia, when in her early thirties. She noticed that the women's skins lost their beauty in the harsh sun. Helen had with her a jar of facial cream

Who is the founder of the Montessori education method?

Maria Montessori braved the opposition of society to become Italy's first female doctor. However, she achieved fame in the field of children's education. Initially, she worked with mentally retarded children, orphans, and the poor. She made some sensational discoveries. At that time it was believed that children could only be taught; they could not learn by themselves. Montessori found that children had a natural desire to learn, and could learn a lot by themselves. She found that this natural power of learning worked best when they were turned loose in a safe, hands-on-learning environment. A child friendly environment, self correcting puzzles, and other equipment were essential to foster this learning. Mentally handicapped children schooled by Maria Montessori not only mastered the basics of self care, but also passed tests meant for mainstream children. Montessori believed that teachers should observe children. The Montessori Method has been embraced as the scientific method for teaching children.

Maria Montessori

mixed to a family formula. She realised that she held the recipe for business success in her hands. She produced and marketed a wide range of products never before available to women including coloured face powder, and foundation cream. Later, she opened a string of beauty salons. Queen Alexandria and the actress Sarah Bernhardt were among the rich and the famous who frequented her salons. In 1953, she set up the Helena Rubenstein Foundation, which enables young women to take up higher education and follow non traditional careers.

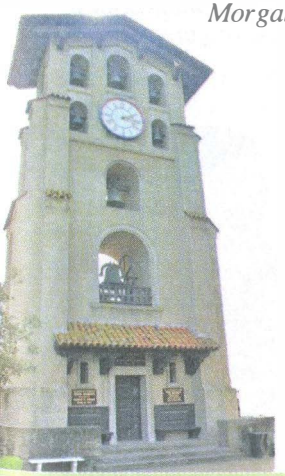


Hearst Castle

What are the achievements of Julia Morgan?

Julia Morgan was the first woman to receive a certificate in architecture from the prestigious Ecole Nationale in Paris. After graduation, she returned to her native San Francisco and worked for the architect John Galen Howard. Morgan opened her own architectural firm in 1904. Morgan's style was noted for using exposed support beams, California redwood, and horizontal lines that blended with the landscape. She also used rectangular wooden tiles and preferred earth colours. One of her first independent projects was the bell tower on the campus of Mills College in Oakland. This bell tower withstood the San Francisco earth quake. Morgan gained fame for supervising the construction of Hearst Castle. She personally designed in minutest detail most of the structures in the castle. She was the architect of over 800 buildings in her lifetime. Julia Morgan was inducted into the California Hall of Fame in 2008.

Bell Tower Built by Morgan



A Great Architect

Julia Morgan was a great architect. When the amazing Nob Hill hotel was all set to open its doors in 1906, an earthquake struck. A new interior was designed by Julia Morgan. She also designed the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California, and a series of YMCA buildings in California, Hawaii and Utah.

Julia Morgan

STAR FACT

Oscar Helen

Helen Keller made two movies on her own life. 'Deliverance', the first one hit the silver screen in 1919. Her second film, 'Helen Keller in Her Story,' won an Oscar in 1955.

How did Helen Keller triumph in the face of tragedy?

A sudden illness at 19 months of age left Helen Keller blind and deaf. Helen devised more than fifty signs to communicate with her family, but she was frustrated. A young teacher Anne Sullivan was sent to work with Helen. It was the beginning of a celebrated teacher-student relationship. Anne placed Helen's hand under running water and spelled

Helen Keller with Her Teacher

out the word 'water'. Helen understood. This breakthrough put Helen on the track to academic success.

Anne introduced Helen to braille. Helen became the first blind-deaf woman to

Why do we consider Virginia Woolf as one of the greatest modern novelists?

'A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction', wrote Virginia Woolf in her novel 'A Room of One's Own'. Virginia's father Adeline Stephen was a famous literary critic, and Virginia grew up in a book lined home. Along with other talented writers such as E.M. Forster and Dora Carrington, she formed the Bloomsbury group, which rejected Victorian values. She married Leonard Woolf, and together, they started the Hogarth Press which published some of the greatest writers of the day.

'The Voyage Out' was Virginia's first novel. Virginia displayed the psychological and emotional motives of her characters in her novels. This is known as stream of consciousness. Virginia wove mental illness into her novel, 'Miss Dalloway'. 'The Waves' and 'To The Lighthouse' are two of her notable novels. Virginia Woolf fought depression to become one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century.

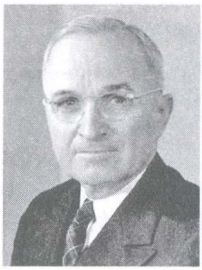
Virginia Woolf

Lytonn Strachey and Woolf

be awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree. She published three works including 'The story of my life', 'Optimism' and 'The world I Live In'. She campaigned for the deaf-blind and the disabled. She was a founding member of the Permanent Blind War Relief, which is now known worldwide as Helen Keller International. Helen Keller showed the world that there are no boundaries to courage and faith.

Why did the US President Harry S. Truman call Eleanor Roosevelt 'The first lady of the world'?

Eleanor Roosevelt was the niece of the U.S president Theodore Roosevelt. However, her 'plain looks and lack of manners', troubled her. Eleanor married a distant cousin Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and turned into a passionate social activist. She campaigned to put a stop to child labour, establish minimum wages and pass laws to protect workers. Eleanor was elected director of the 'Bureau of Women's Activities' by the Democratic National Committee. In 1932, she played a key role in Franklin's successful bid for presidency.



Harry S Truman

Eleanor became the longest serving First Lady of the United States. She gave lectures and radio broadcasts and wrote a column in a daily newspaper. She fought for the rights of the blacks. Eleanor was elected as the head of the United Nations Human Rights Commission. U.S President Harry S. Truman called her the first lady of the world. Such were her contributions to humanity.

Eleanor Roosevelt

A Statue of Eleanor Roosevelt

How did Alice Paul make history?

American women can never forget Alice Paul and her fights for women's rights. Alice Paul was born in New Jersey. Alice turned politically active while studying in London, and joined the movement for women's right to vote. She was jailed and went on a hunger strike.

Alice Paul returned to the United States, and threw herself into the American women's struggle for the right to vote. She served as the Chair of the Congressional Committee of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. However, she left the party, and joined the Congressional Union of Woman Suffrage. The party later became the National Women's Party. This party used dramatic tactics, and even picketed the White House. Alice was jailed, and went on a hunger strike in protest. Women won the right to vote in 1920. Thereafter, Alice Paul fought to gain equal rights for women, until she was felled by a stroke in 1974.

Alice Paul

STAR FACT **Detective Eleanor**

After her death, Eleanor Roosevelt starred as a First Lady who dons the role of a detective, in a series of best selling detective stories. Her son Elliott wrote these detective stories.

Agatha Christie

Why is Agatha Christie regarded as the queen of detective fiction?

Hercule Poirot often tapped his forehead and said "These little gray cells. It is up to them - as you say over here". Hercule Poirot was the Belgian detective with the egg shaped head, created by Agatha Christie. Poirot appears in Christie's first detective novel, 'The Mysterious Affair at Styles'. Miss Marple was Christie's other famous fictional detective.

Christie's father died, when she was a child. Her mother encouraged her to write at a very early age. In 56 years, Christie wrote 66 detective novels. She entertained more people for more hours at a time than any other writer of her generation'.

What are the contributions of Pearl S. Buck to American literature?

Pearl S. Buck was a great writer who was 'absorbed in the wonder of earth'. Fittingly her greatest work was 'The Good Earth'. This novel tells the tale of a poor Chinese peasant and his love for the earth. It was an American bestseller and won the Pulitzer Prize.

'Pearl S. Buck was born in

Pearl S. Buck

West Virginia, but she spent her youth in China. She raised her voice for the children of American fathers and Asian mothers, who were often abandoned. She also took an active interest in mentally retarded children; her own daughter was mentally retarded. She won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1938.

Why is Amelia Earhart considered one of the world's most celebrated aviators?

Amelia Earhart was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic, and also the first female pilot to make solo transatlantic and transpacific flights. During the war, Amelia worked as a military nurse in Canada, and later, she became a social worker and taught English to immigrant children. Besides work, Amelia had one hobby. She enjoyed watching airplane stunt shows, which were popular in the 1920's. Then one day, she took a 10-minute plane ride and knew what her vocation would be- she would learn to fly.

After 10 hours of instruction and several crashes, Amelia was ready to fly. She made her first solo flight in 1921. By the next year, Amelia had saved enough money to buy her own plane. In

Amelia Earhart

1928, she flew with two other pilots from the United States to England. Though Amelia was just a passenger, she became the first woman to cross the Atlantic. The plane they flew in was 'The Friendship,' and the trip was made on June 17-18th, 1928.

After this, Amelia became very famous. In May 1932, she crossed the Atlantic alone, and set a new transatlantic crossing record of 13 hours, 30 minutes. Several years later, she became the first woman to fly from California to Hawaii. Amelia's last flight began in June 1937. However, the American Coast Guard lost track of the plane and it was never found. No one knows what really happened, and Amelia Earhart's disappearance remains a mystery to this day.

Amy Johnson

Amy Johnson was the first woman to have flown solo from England to Australia in May 1930- a distance of 17,600 kms. In 1936, she also achieved a record-breaking solo flight from England to South Africa. In July 1933 she and her husband made a transatlantic flight from England to America. It was the first non-stop flight from the two countries. Her flying career began in 1928, and her other triumphs included becoming the first female ground engineer licensed by the Air Ministry.

Why is Golda Meir an icon for woman power?

Golda Meir was one of the founders of Israel, and the most prominent woman politician of her era. Her childhood in Russia was a time of severe poverty. Her father left for America to try to make a better life for his family, and settled in Milwaukee. Three years later, the rest of the family followed, when Golda was 8 years old.

When Golda was 19, she married Morris Meyerson, and they immigrated to Palestine. In 1928, she was offered the job of secretary of Histadrut's Council for Women workers. Golda moved quickly up the political ranks, and during World War II, she held key posts in the World Zionist Organization.

Golda Meir

When the state of Israel was established in 1948, a vast amount of money was needed to equip the army to defend the new Jewish state from attacking Arab

nations. Golda volunteered to go to the United States to raise money. She was so successful with her speeches in establishing an emotional link between the U.S. Jewish community and Israel, that she returned with $50 million dollars.

Golda Meir was a signer of the Israeli Proclamation of Independence on May 1948. In her first position, she was appointment as the Israeli envoy to Russia.

In 1956, Golda Meir became Israeli foreign minister, the second-highest position in the government. She was chosen to be Prime Minister in national elections, at age 71. Golda Meir began her term as Prime Minister after Israel's stunning victory in the Six-Day War of 1967. She overcame many personal hardships because she was a woman. As a child, she fought with her parents to continue her education, and as a married woman, she made a difficult choice between her family and her career, making her an icon for the feminist cause.

Margaret Mead

Why has Margaret Mead given us a better understanding of the world?

Margaret Mead was a distinguished anthropologist, an intellectual and a scientist. She is the author of numerous books on primitive societies, and she also wrote about many contemporary issues. She was born in Philadelphia on December 16th, 1901, and her parents were professors.

Barnard College was the place where Margaret studied, and became interested in the field of anthropology, which is the study of diversity among cultures. While in school, Margaret travelled to Samoa, in order to study how Samoan girls and American girls are raised differently. Margaret found that a girl's personality is largely shaped by culture, and not by genetics. Her

Why were Barbara McClintock's contributions to science epoch making?

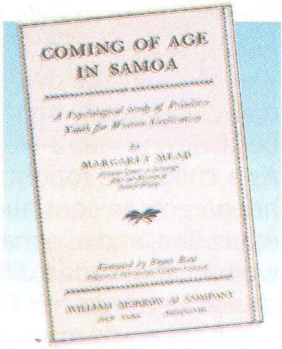
What's it like to make an amazing discovery-and then have nobody believe it? Barbara McClintock experienced this. In the 1940's, she unlocked some of the deepest secrets about genes and DNA. Yet, it took nearly 20 years for her work to be accepted.

Barbara McClintock

Barbara McClintock was one of the first women geneticists. The daughter of a physician, McClintock was born in Connecticut, and educated at Cornell's College of Agriculture, where she received her PhD in for work in botany. In 1944, she was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, becoming only the third woman to be so honoured. McClintock then joined the Carnegie Institute's Cold Spring Harbor

book, 'Growing up in Samoa', was considered a very important work, and her book is still a best seller.

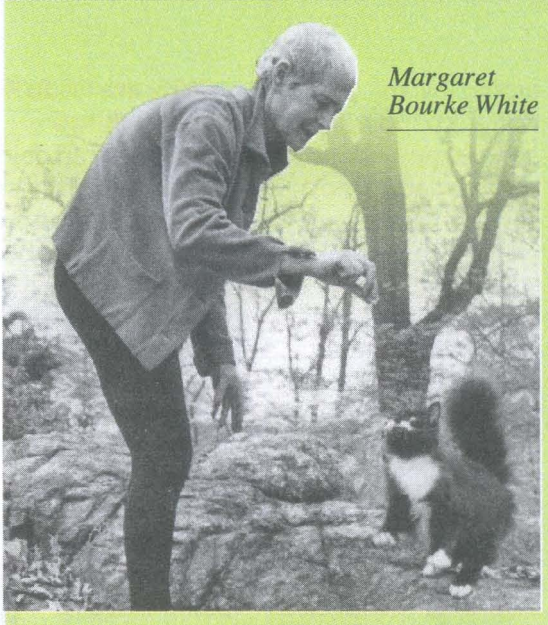
Margaret continued her studies of different cultures. She devoted her entire life to teaching people that all cultures share things in common, even if the people of that culture are considered 'primitive'. She went on to become the most famous and well-respected anthropologist in the world, and because of her, we all have a better understanding of the world and our place in it.



Margaret Mead's famous work

Laboratory, New York., where she stayed on for the rest her life.

In 1983, Barbara won Nobel Prize for her study in genetics. She won the prize in the Physiology and Medicine categories, for her discovery that chromosomes can break off from neighbouring chromosomes, and recombine to create unique genetic combinations. The importance of her research, performed on corn was not recognized for many years. She won the Nobel Prize for this discovery only years later. Her discoveries form the very foundation of much of today's research in genetic engineering.



Margaret Bourke White

Why is Margaret Bourke-White a legend in the field of photography?

Margaret Bourke-White was born in New York City on 14th June, 1904. She became interested in photography while studying at Cornell University. She first gained recognition as an industrial photographer based in Cleveland, Ohio, where she specialized in architectural photography. Margaret later joined Fortune magazine as a staff photographer. She made several trips to the Soviet Union, and in 1931, published 'Eyes on Russia'. In 1936, Bourke-White joined Life Magazine, and her photograph of the Fort Peck Dam appeared on its first front-cover.

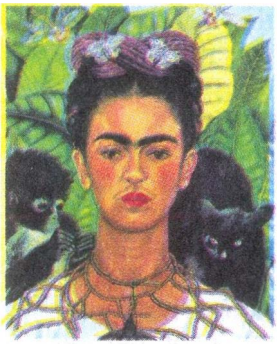
During her unique career, Bourke-White was torpedoed in the Mediterranean, at-

tacked by the Luftwaffe, stranded on an Arctic island, bombarded in Moscow, and pulled out of the Chesapeake when her chopper crashed. She was the first Western photographer to document Soviet industry. It was after the revolution. She was in Czechoslovaakia and other Balkan states just before Hitler moved in to ignite World War II, to prepare a travelogue. She was stationed in Moscow just before Germany bombed its former ally.

Margaret's photographs are in a number of museums. Her mastery of the medium, her daring, cleverness, and knack of being in the right place at the right time have all made her a legend among photographers.

Why are Frida Kahlo's paintings often shocking?

The Mexican painter Frida Kahlo created striking, often shocking, images that reflected her turbulent life. She did not originally plan to become an artist. A polio survivor, at 15, Kahlo entered the premedical programme at the National Preparatory School in Mexico City. However, this training ended three years later, when Kahlo was gravely hurt in a bus accident. During her convalescence, Kahlo had begun to paint with oils.



Frida Kahlo-
A Self Portrait

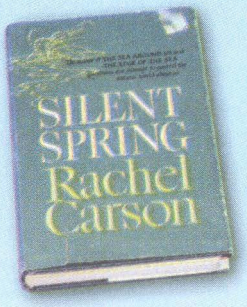
Her pictures, mostly self-portraits and still lives, were filled with the bright colours and flattened forms of the Mexican folk art she loved. At 21, Kahlo fell in love with the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, and married him. The couple travelled to the United States and France, where Kahlo met luminaries from the worlds of art and politics. She had her first solo exhibition at the Julien Levy Gallery in New York City in 1938.

During her lifetime, Frida created some 200 paintings, drawings, and sketches related to her experiences in life, physical and emotional pain and her

Why is Rachel Carson considered the cornerstone of new environmentalism?

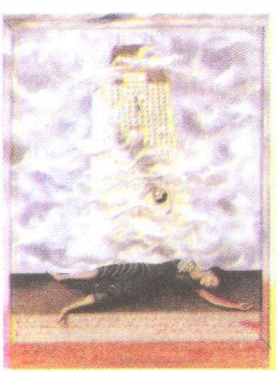
Rachel Carson grew up on a small Pennsylvania farm, where she spent hours exploring the outdoors. She always loved books, and when she was young, thought she would be a writer. She went to the Pennsylvania College for Women. A required course in biology made her change assumptions about her career: she majored in zoology, and then went to Johns Hopkins for a master's degree in genetics.

Rachel Carson



Carson's famous book, 'Silent Spring'

While working as a scientist-bureaucrat for the government, Carson continued writing. In 1941, she published 'Under the Sea-Wind', her first book. She was a quiet, private person, fascinated with the workings of nature from a scientific and aesthetic point of view. Carson went on to write 'The Sea Around Us' and 'The Edge of the Sea', and finally, 'Silent Spring' in 1962. In the wake of Silent Spring,



turbulent relationship with Diego. She produced 143 paintings, 55 of which are self-portraits.

Perhaps best known for these self-portraits, Kahlo's work is remembered for its 'pain and passion', and its intense, vibrant colours. Mexican culture and Amerindian cultural tradition figure prominently in her work, which has sometimes been characterized as naive art ,or folk art.

A Painting by Frida Kahlo

which described the dangers of pesticides such as DDT, she was attacked personally, and as a scientist by many. 'Silent Spring' became a runaway best seller, with international reverberations. Even today, it is still regarded as the cornerstone of new environmentalism.

STAR FACT

Silent Spring

A place where no birds sang, eggs never hatched, and apple trees bore no fruit- a place where cattle died mysteriously in the fields, and children on the play ground.

Such grim visions fill Rachel Carson's book, 'Silent Spring.' She took note of the effects of the unregulated use of pesticides and herbicides. Carson's great love of the natural world drove her to write an expose of the chemical industry, specifically its unregulated use of DDT. Her book 'Silent Spring,' alerted millions to the dangers of the poisons that are in common use in farms and households around the world.

● *Subroto Banerjee*

Why is Simone de Beauvoir known as the forerunner of contemporary feminism?

Born and educated in Paris, Simone de Beauvoir was among the first women permitted to complete a programme of study at the Ecole Normale Superieure. Through her lifelong friendship with

Simone de Beauvoir

Sartre, another philosopher, she contributed significantly to the development and expression of a philosophy known as existentialist philosophy.

Simone de Beauvoir is best known as the foremother of contemporary feminism. Born in 1908, she rejected religion and conformity in her teens,

and then turned to philosophy, becoming a professor in 1929. Her landmark book 'The Second Sex,' was published in 1949, and later translated into at least a dozen languages. By the time of her death in 1986, the book had sold more than a million copies in the US alone. Her works of fiction focus on women who take responsibility for themselves by making life-altering decisions. The many volumes of her own autobiography exhibit the application of similar principles.

Jean Paul Sartre

Dorothy Hodgkin

of Merit
Hodgkin received the highest Queen's honour in 1965,
e vacancy left by Winston Churchill.
ty is grateful to the Hodgkin family for this loan.

Order of Merit Medal of Dorothy Hodgkin

Why are Dorothy Hodgkin's contributions to science important?

Dorothy Hodgkin studied chemistry at Somerville College, but moved to Cambridge University to work on the development of x-ray crystallography. In 1934, Hodgkin returned to Oxford and carried out research into the structure of penicillin. Hodgkin was eventually able to establish that penicillin consisted of a ring of three carbons and nitrogen. She then went on to determine the structure of the antibiotic cephalosporin C.

Hodgkin became the first scientist in Britain, to use a computer to analyze the molecular structure of complex chemicals. This enabled her to produce three-dimensional models. In 1948, Hodgkin began her work on vitamin B12. Hodgkin and her team took eight years to determine its structure. Later, she carried out research into the structure of insulin.

Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks is an example of how the actions of one person can start a chain reaction of events, that have far-reaching results. Her refusal to give up her seat on a city bus inspired other African-Americans to demand better treatment in all areas of their lives.

This is what happened to Rosa Parks. When she was asked to give up her seat

Dorothy won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1964. She was also awarded the Lenin Peace Prize in 1987. She was a great chemist, and a tolerant lover of people.

Why was Chien Shiung Wu called 'the first lady of physics'?

Dr. Chien-Shiung Wu was a physicist who performed a historic experiment, overturning what had been considered a fundamental law of nature. In her most famous experiment, announced in 1957, she and her colleagues overthrew a law of symmetry in physics called the principle of conservation of parity that had been considered unshakeable for 30 years.

Chien-Shiung Wu was born in Shanghai, China, in 1912. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in China in 1934, and came to the United States in 1936. As a nuclear physicist, Dr. Wu worked on the Manhattan Project during the Second World War. She became a professor of physics at Columbia, and later held honorary professorships at several Chinese Universities.

for a white man, she refused. She was tired after a hard day's work- and tired of the way her people were being treated,

Her refusal became a key part of the modern movement for civil rights, and her actions sparked further action, and set an example for many.

Margaret Thatcher

Chien-Shiung Wu

She did receive numerous honours and awards, including being the first woman elected president of the American Physical Society. She died in New York in February 1997.

Why is Margaret Thatcher an important figure in British history?

Margaret Thatcher was Britain's first female prime minister, and served three consecutive terms in office. She was born on 13th October 1925. She went to Oxford University, and then became a research chemist, retraining to become a barrister in 1954. In 1951, she married a businessman, Denis Thatcher.Margaret Thatcher became Conservative Member of Parliament in 1959. In1979, she became prime minister.

Thatcher introduced many reforms, like privatisation of state owned industries, during her first term, which helped the economy grow. Then there was an unpredicted event- a war began over the Falklands Islands, off the coast of South America. The islands were British, and the people living

there wanted things to stay that way. But, the government of Argentina claimed, the islands were theirs, and invaded them in April 1982. Britain swung into action, and soon the islands were under British control again. This victory impressed the people in Britainand they elected the government again. Margaret became a very well known international figure. At home, her government introduced huge reforms in all sectors, all of them very controversial. Thatcher's time as PM was very important in British history.

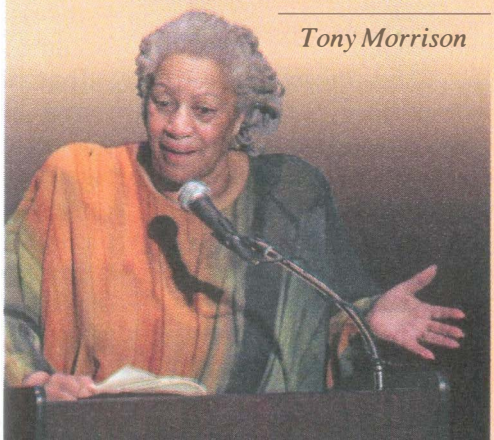
Why is Anne Frank's diary the most famous one in the world?

'The diary of Anne Frank' is a touching record of a young girl's life in the backdrop of Nazi cruelty. Annie Frank was born to an upper class Jewish family in Germany. They moved to Amsterdam, to escape from the clutches of Adolf Hitler, but Germany invaded the Netherlands in 1940. On her thirteenth birthday, Anne was gifted a small book by her father Otto Frank. 'Our many Jewish friends and acquaintances are being taken away. We assume that most of them are being murdered', wrote Anne Frank.

Three weeks after Anne's birthday, the family went into hiding. The daily life in

Who was Toni Morrison?

Toni Morrison is the first black woman, to receive the Nobel Prize for literature. She was born in Ohio to Georg Wofford, a shipyard welder, in 1931. By day, she worked as an editor



Tony Morrison

Anne Frank

the secret shelter, Anne's deepest thoughts about life, war, and her longing for peace are recorded in the diary. The Frank family and their friends were betrayed, and Anne Frank died in a German concentration camp. Anne Frank's diary sold over 25 million copies worldwide.

in a publishing house. She wrote in the night. She found writing to be exciting, and her characters took on a life of their own. Her first novel, 'The Bluest Eye' was about a girl who prayed for blue eyes. 'Sula', 'Song of Solomon', 'Tar Baby' and 'Beloved 'are some of her major novels. In 'Tar Baby', she describes for the first time interactions between black and white characters 'Beloved', which tells the story of an escaped slave and her children, won Morrison the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1988. She received the Nobel Prize 1993.

Why is it said that no one loved gorillas more than Dian Fossey ?

"I feel more comfortable with gorillas than with people", said Dian Fossey. A study trip to Africa in 1963 proved to be a turning point in her life. In Rwanda, she met Dr. Louis Leakey, who was studying fossils. She also saw gorillas for the first time, a sight that thrilled her to the core. Three years later, Leakey sent Fossey to study gorillas in the Congo. However, political violence forced her to flee to Rwanda. Here she set up the Karisoke Research Centre in the Virguna National Park. Fossey conducted path breaking

Dian Fossey

Corazon Aquino

Corazon Aquino was the first women President of the Philippines. Her husband Senator Benigno Aquino jr was a fierce critic of Ferdinand Marcos, then the Presidnet of the Philippines. He was assassinated. Corazon Aquino spearheaded the nationwide protest, called the PeoplePower Revolution, against Ferdinand Marcos. She toppled Marcos from power, and became president in 1986. Corazon Aquino restored democracy in the Philippines.

Corazon Aquino

How did Sylvia Plath astonish the literary word?

Sylvia Plath was born in Boston. Her father, Otto Plath was a professor of biology, who specialised in bees. Sylvia Plath was a brilliant student. She studied at the Smith College from 1950 to 1955. Later, she described this phase of her life in 'The Bell Jar', an autobiographical novel which is now considered a classic. As a young woman, Sylvia Plath suffered from spells of depression. She married the poet Ted Hughes. Sylvia Plath committed suicide at the age of 31. 'Ariel', a collection of Plath's

Sylvia Plath

research in this center. She lived alone with the gorillas for long periods, and won their trust. Fossey's research won her name and fame. She fought the gorilla hunters and wrote a bestselling book, 'Gorillas in the Mist'. Dian Fossey was murdered in her cabin at the research centre in December 1985. Her killers have never been identified.

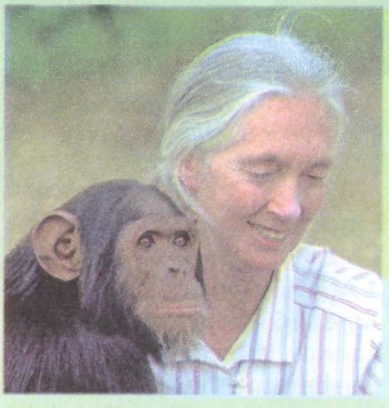
Dian Fossey and Gorillas

poems published after her death, astonished the writing world with its power. The poems were carefully crafted. Ariel became one of the best selling volumes of poetry, published in England and America in the twentieth century. Plath's 'Collected Poems' which was assembled by Ted Hughes after Plath's death, won a Pulitzer Prize.

Why does Jane Goodall hold the pride of place in the study of chimpanzees?

Jane Goodall shattered the long standing belief that only man used tools. She saw a chimpanzee, sticking a blade of grass into a termite mound, and eating the termites clinging to the blade of grass. Goodall also discovered that, chimpanzees ate other animals occasionally, and that they were more intelligent and less fierce than previously thought. Jane Goodall was the first of Leakey's angels. Louis Leakey raised funds for the research in Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania.

Goodall gave names such as Fifi and David Greybeard to the chimpanzees. She spent months gaining the trust of the chimpanzees, and became a part of their social system. Goodall earned a PhD from Cambridge, the only one to do so without getting an undergraduate degree. She won several prizes, including Woman of the Year Award and the Tyler prize for environmental achievement.



Jane Goodall with a Chimpanzee

Valentina Tereshkova and NASA Astronaut Catherine Coleman

What was the epoch-making achievement of Valentina Tereshkova?

At 12.30 pm on the 16th of June 1963, Valentina Tereshkova was launched into space. She became the first woman to conquer space. She piloted the space craft Vostok VI, and orbited the Earth forty eight times.

Valentina Tershkova was born in the Volga River village of Masslennikovo. In 1959, she joined the Yaroslavl Air Sports Club, and became a skilled parachutist. Inspired by the flight of Yuri Gagarin, the first man in space, Valentina volunteered for the Soviet space programme. The Russian space programme needed people with parachuting experience. She underwent eighteen months of hard training before becoming chief pilot of Vostok VI. Valentina's flight proved that women could withstand the stresses of space. Valentina was decorated with the Order of Lenin and the Gold Star Medal, and toured the world as a goodwill ambassador. She married Colonel Andrian Nikolayev, who had orbited the Earth sixty four times in Vostok III.

Why is Aung San Suu Kyi regarded as a great figure in the fight for democracy?

Aung San Suu Kyi was the daughter of Aung San, the father of modern day Burma. She was influenced by Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non violence. In 1988, she addressed a rally of half a million people in front of the famous Shwedagon Pagoda in Rangoon, and called for a democratic

Aung San Suu Kyi

STAR FACT

The First Woman Prime Minister

Sirimavo Bandaranaike became the first woman Prime Minister in the world, when she was chosen to head the government of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in 1960, following the assassination of her husband.

Sirimavo Bandaranaike was born in 1916, to an aristocratic family. Married to Solomon Bandaranaike in 1940 when he was a minister in the government of Ceylon, then a British colony, Solomon Bandaranaike became the Prime Minister of Ceylon in 1956. In 1959, He was assassinated. Then, Sirimavo became the leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. And, in July 1960, she became the first woman Prime Minister in the world. Her party lost the 1965 elections.

Sirimavo Bandaranaike

Sirimavo Bandaranaike was back as the Prime Minister in 1970 elections.

Her second term was difficult, with a rebellion in 1971, as well as the establishment of a new republican constitution in 1972. She was deprived of her civil rights in 1980. In 1994, she was re-elected Prime Minister. Her daughter, Chandrika Kumaratunga, who was also briefly Prime Minister in 1994, later became the President.

government. Aung San Suu Kyi founded the National League for Democracy in the same year. The military government put her under house arrest in July, 1989. She secured a landslide win in the 1990 general election, while in jail. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. With the prize money of 1.3 million dollars, she set up a health and education trust for the Burmese people. She worked for democracy and freedom in Burma. Aung San Suu Kyi was freed from house arrest on November 13, 2010.

Megawati Sukarnoputri

Why is Megawati Sukarnoputri regarded as a powerhouse of Indonesian politics?

Megawati means 'Goddess of the cloud'. Her father Sukarno led Indonesia to independence, and was its first president. When Megawati was nineteen, Sukarno was overthrown by Suharto.

Megawati joined the Indonesian Democratic Party at the age of forty. In the first free parliamentary elections held after Suharto's resigna-

Why is Chandrika Kumaratunga considered as a great leader in Sri Lanka?

Both the parents of Chandrika Kumaratunga served as prime ministers of Sri Lanka- her father Solomon Bandaranaike and her mother, Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Her husband, Vijaya Kumaratunga, with whom she had co founded the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party, was assassinated. In August 1994, she became the Prime Minister. She took the presidency as well three months later in a separate election. She stood for the elections again in 1999. A suicide bomber made a bid on her life just days before the polling. Kumaratunga lost sight in one eye but won 51% of the vote to be elected for a second term.

Chandrika Kumaratunga

Why is Sheikh Hasina regarded as a great political leader in Bangladesh?

On August 15th, 1975 Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, the founder of independent Bangladesh, and his family were assassinated by military officers. Sheikh

Sheikh Hasina

tion, her party won the most votes. She served as vice president. Megawati became president of Indonesia in 2001; the first woman to do so. However, Megawati lost power in the 2004 Presidential election.

Hasina, the daughter of Mujibur Rehman escaped, as she was in West Germany at the time. Sheikh Hasina was elected leader of the Awami League in 1981, while in exile. She was elected as the leader of the opposition in 1986 and 1991. Sheikh Hasina won the 1996 parliamentary election, and took oath as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. She won the 2008 parliamentary elections and is currently the Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Benazir Bhutto

Why was Benazir Bhutto regarded as a woman of courage and conviction?

Benazir Bhutto was a prime minister's daughter. Following the 1977 elections, her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was arrested and hanged. Benazir, though under house arrest, found herself the head of the Pakistan People's Party. In 1984, she was allowed to travel to England. Two years later, martial law was lifted in Pakistan, and Benazir returned to a rousing welcome by hundreds of thousands of people, at the Lahore airport. In 1988, the dictator Zia-ul-Haq announced elections. Making light of her advanced pregnancy, Bhutto campaigned for 15 hours a day. Her party won a majority with the support of smaller parties. Benazir became the youngest, and the first woman Prime Minister to lead a Muslim nation in modern times. She lost the elections in 1990, but won the 1993 elections. However, her government was dismissed in 1996. On 27th December, 2007 Benazir Bhutto was assassinated at a pre election rally in Rawalpindi.

OUR GREAT WOMEN

How did Raziya Sultan become a powerful ruler?

As a young girl, Raziya studied the science of war. Impressed by her ability, her father Iltumish, the Sultan of Delhi made her his heir. However, after the death of Iltumish, the nobles, enthroned his irresponsible son Ruknuddin. Raziya overthrew Ruknuddin with the help of the nobles, and became Sultan of Delhi. The governors of Badaun, Multan, Hansi, and Lahore laid siege to her fort. Raziya cleverly won over two of the generals, and the rest fled. Raziya was an able ruler. Her kingdom extended from Sindh in the west, to Bengal in the east. She appointed non-Turks to high posts. The Turkish noblemen rose in revolt. Kabir Khan, the governor of Lahore was the first to do so. Raziya attacked him suddenly, and put him behind bars. However, she lost a heroic battle at Delhi and was beheaded. Raziya Sultan was the first woman to ascend the throne of Delhi.

Grave of Raziya Sultan near Turkman Gate, Delhi

Rani Padmini

Rani Padmini was a Rajput queen. Allaudin Khilji invaded India and reached the gates of Chittor, the capital city of the Rajputs. Khilji desired to capture Chittor and its beautiful queen, Rani Padmini. But, the Rajputs under Rani Padmini fought like tigers. Khilji attacked Chittor again, and rushed into the fort, only to be stunned. The rani and the other women had committed Johar. They had burnt themselves alive.

● *Namita Dixit*

What is Noorjahan remembered as an extra-ordinary queen?

Noorjahan was a brave beauty. She was born Meherunnisa, to Mirza Giyas Beg who went on to become the Diwan of Kabul. Meherunnisa was well educated, and excelled in painting. She married Sher Afgan, a royal. However, he was killed, and Meherunnisa was appointed lady in waiting at Akbar's court.

Noorjahan

Jehangir, the son of Akbar fell in love with Meherunnisa and married her in 1611. Jehangir led a life of ease and luxury. Meherunnisa's influence grew by the day. Jehangir bestowed on her the title Noor Mahal, meaning light of the palace. Later he gave her the title Noorjahan, or light of the world. She would sit in the balcony of her palace and the nobles would listen to her orders. Coins were minted in her name. Noorjahan was a highly cultured and kind hearted lady. She was buried beside her husband in a mausoleum erected by her.

Rani Lakshmi Bai

Why is Rani Laxmi Bai Known as the Joan of Arc of the Indian freedom struggle?

At the age of fourteen, Laxmi Bai was married to Gangadhar Rao, the Raja of Jhansi. When Gangadhar Rao died, Lord Dalhousie ordered the Rani to hand over to them the reins of Jhansi. "I will not give my Jhansi", said Laxmi Bai. Jhansi witnessed an uprising against the

First Indian Women

- First women President: **Prathibha Patil**
- First women Prime Minister: **Indira Gandhi**
- First woman Minister: **Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit**
- First woman Chief Minister: **Sucheta Kriplani**
- First woman Speaker of the Lok Sabha: **Meira Kumar**
- First woman Governor: **Sarojini Naidu**

Prathibha Patil

- First woman President of the UN General Assembly: **Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit**
- First woman judge of Supreme Court: **Fathima Beevi**
- First woman judge of High Court: **Anna Chandy**
- First woman IPS Officer: **Kiran Bedi**
- First woman nobel laureate: **Mother Teresa**
- First lady cadet to join the Indian Army: **Priya Jhingan**
- First woman Air Marshal of Indian Air Force: **Padma Bandhopadhyay**
- First Indian woman to receive Booker Prize award: **Arundhati Roy**
- First Indian woman in space: **Kalpana Chawla**

How did Kasturba Gandhi affect and influence Gandhi's life?

"Only two sons of mine have gone to jail, but twenty thousand sons of Mother India are in jail. How can I bemoan my fate?" said Kasturba Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi highlights Kasturba's selfless devotion in his autobiography. She led a simple life. Kasturba toured various states, spreading the message of freedom and Swad-

British on June 5th, 1857.

The Rani was an inspirational leader, and the people fought for her. She bravely proclaimed that her reign had begun. However, the British forces led by Sir Hugh Rose laid siege to Jhansi. The Rani defended Jhansi with all her might, but the British broke through. Rani Laxmi Bai escaped with a band of soldiers and joined other revolutionary leaders at Kalpi. They took Gwalior as the Rani fought in a man's dress at the head of fifty horsemen. The Rani died heroically while defending Gwalior against the British.

eshi. She called upon women to take to khadi,and practice spinning. Her words came from the heart, and influenced the masses. Kasturba had to sacrifice her family life as her husband was frequently

Kasturba Gandhi

in jail. At the time of the Dandi March, Stree Swarajya Sangh was formed.This was headed by Kasturba and Mithu Ben. They led the boycott of foreign clothes and the picketing of liquor shops. Kasturba was arrested several times. On February 24th, 1944 Kasturba passed away in prison wearing the khadi sari spun by Mahatma Gandhi.

What is the role of Sarojini Naidu in India's freedom struggle?

Sarojini Naidu was born in a brilliant, Bengali brahmin family. She spent her childhood at a comfortable home in Hyderabad, with a garden in front, and woods at the rear. Sarojini Naidu became a national sensation when she passed the Madras matriculation in the first place at the age of twelve. She was already a poetess at eighteen. She was guided by Edmund Gosse and Arthur Symons, her lecturers at Cambridge.

While trying to solve a problem in algebra, she wrote hundreds of lines of poetry. She chased beautiful music and colourful words and wove them into rhyming lines. The passionate love for the motherland, nature and the inner joy of spiritual emotion breathe a magical life in to her poems.

Sarojini Naidu

She was the first Indian woman President of the Indian National Congress. She was a great freedom fighter. In fact, ,she was the greatest Indian woman of her time, and perhaps, one of the greatest in the world.

Who was Vijayalakshmi Pandit?

Vijayalakshmi Pandit was the daughter of Motilal Nehru. Jawaharlal Nehru was her brother. In 1919, her family came under the magical spell of Mahatma Gandhi.

In 1932, as part of the civil disobedience movement, Vijayalaksmi Pandit organised hartals and processions and delivered speeches. She was arrested along with her sister Krishna, and spent one year in the Lucknow jail. During the Quit India movement, she braved British fire to help the wounded and carry them to hospitals. She was jailed.

After Independence, she had a distinguished innings in the field of foreign affairs. She became India's first ambassador to the Soviet Union. She headed the Indian delegation to the United Nations from 1947 to 1949. She was elected to the Lok Sabha. In 1953, she was elected as the first woman president of the UN General Assembly. Vijayalakshmi Pandit died on December1, 1990.

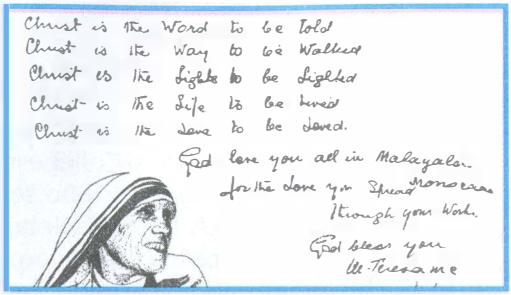
Vijayalakshmi Pandit

Why is Mother Teresa known as the 'Angel of Mercy'?

Mother Teresa

Mother Teresa was born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, the youngest of three children of an Albanian builder, on August 26th, 1910 in Skopje, Macedonia. At the age of 18, she joined the Order of the Sisters of Our Lady of Loreto in Ireland. It was here that she chose the name Teresa, in memory of Saint Terese of Lisieux.

Mother Teresa later came to Calcutta to teach. However, she always wanted to serve the poor, and she received what she be-


Christ is the Word to be told
Christ is the Way to be Walked
Christ is the Light to be Lighted
Christ is the Life to be lived
Christ is the Love to be loved.
God love you all in Malayalam
for the love you spread through your Work.
God bless you
Mt Teresa me

A Message Mother Teresa Gave When She Visited Malayala Manorama, the House of Tell Me Why on 18th January 1974

lieved to be a call from God, telling her to devote herself to working with the poorest in India. So she got permission to establish a new order of nuns, called The Missionaries of Charity. She and her fellows gathered dying people off the streets of Calcutta and brought them to this home to care for them. Mother Teresa's first orphanage was started in 1953. While in 1957, she and her Missionaries of Charity began working with lepers. In the years following, her homes have been established in hundreds of locations in the world. Mother Teresa died in 1997

Mother Teresa has been given many awards, including the 'Padmashree Award', The Nobel Peace Prize', The Pope John XXIII Peace Prize', and 'Medal of Freedom' as well as many more. All through her life, she served people suffering from various incurable diseases, and those unwanted by the society... so is it any wonder that she is called 'The Angel Of Mercy'?

Why is Aruna Asaf Ali regarded as a great freedom fighter?

Aruna Asaf Ali was a true heroine of the Independence movement. On August 8th, 1942, the British threw Mahatma Gandhi and the other great leaders into prison. In the nation's hour of need,

Aruna Asaf Ali

Aruna Asaf Ali proved her mettle. Watched by thousands, she hoisted the national flag at the Gowalia Tank Maidan.

Aruna was iron willed, and as lovely as a rose. In 1924, she married Asaf Ali

Captain Lakshmi

How did Captain Lakshmi come into India's freedom movement?

Captain Lakshmi fought fearlessly on the battle field for India's freedom. She was a doctor, and received her MBBS degree from the Madras Medical College in 1928. She moved to Singapore, and set up a successful practice. In 1943, Netaji Subash Chandra Bose called upon women to join his Indian national Army.

An inspired Lakshmi, joined as Colonel in the Rani of Jhansi regiment. She fought on the battle front, and treated the wound-

brushing off the opposition of society. The Salt movement saw Aruna Asaf Ali in her element. She prepared salt, led processions, and addressed meetings. She was arrested.

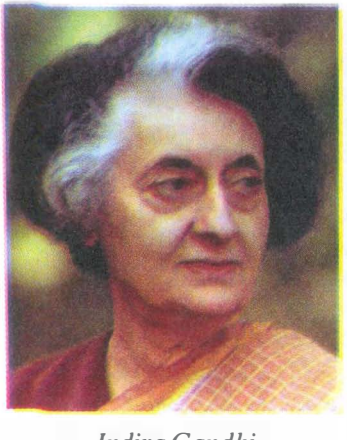
She was arrested again in 1932, when she took part in the Satyagraha movement. Following her hoisting of the national flag, Aruna Asaf Ali was forced to go underground. After her death, Aruna Asaf Ali was awarded the Bharat Ratna.

Why do we consider Indira Gandhi as a powerful leader?

"My public life began when I was three", said Indira Gandhi. Indira was born into the aristocratic Nehru family. She married Feroz Gandhi, a supporter of the Indian National Congress. Indira was groomed by her father Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India. Indira Gandhi was elected president of the Congress party in 1959, and the Prime Minister of India in 1966. The public applauded her bold decision to privatise 14 major private banks in 1969. In 1971, she led India to victory over Pakistan, and recognised the Republic of Bangladesh.

The Emergency declared in June 26, 1975 was a dark chapter in her political life as large scale cruelties were committed. Indira Gandhi lost power in the 1977 elections, but she won a landslide major-

ed. However, Captain Lakshmi was captured and brought to India. She received a hero's welcome. After Independence, she became a Rajya Sabha MP. During the Bangladesh crisis, she organised relief camps and medical help in Calcutta for the Bangladesh refugees. She was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 1998.



Indira Gandhi

ity in 1980. Her fight against terrorism in Punjab led to her untimely death. On October 31st, 1984, Indira's own bodyguards shot her in cold blood.

Kalpana Chawla

Kalpana Chawla explored the limits of her dreams and died a heroine's death. She was the first Indian born woman to travel to space. Her flying dreams were inspired by J.R.D Tata, a pioneering Indian pilot. After earning her degree in aeronautical engineering from the Punjab Engineering College, Kalpana Chawla left for the United States. She obtained two Master's degrees, and a Ph.D. In 1982, she married Jean Pierre Harrison, and became a U.S citizen. She joined the NASA Ames Research Center.

Kalpana Chawla

On December 5th, 1997 she flew to space in the STS-87 Columbia spacecraft. It made 252 orbits round the Earth, and Chawla was given a special award by her peers. In 2003, the ill-fated STS-107, Columbia space craft flew into space carrying Kalpana Chawla and six other crew members. While re-entering the Earth's atmosphere, the space shuttle shattered and everybody in it met a tragic end in 2003.

WOMEN WHO MADE HEADLINES

Why was Jiang Qing considered one of the powerful women in the world?

Jiang Qing's early life included an acting career, failed marriages and jail time for alleged radical activity. In 1938, she became wife to the great communist leader Mao Zedong. She made constant bids for power up the ladder of the Communist Party and eventually came to lead a powerful group known as the Gang of Four.

The Gang of Four reigned over every cultural institution in China, ordered the destruction of countless ancient books, buildings and paintings. Jiang

Marilyn Monroe

One of the glamorous women of all time, Marilyn Monroe's real name was Norma Jeanne Morteson but was baptised as Norma Jeanne Baker. Born in 1926, she became one of the celebrated film personalities of her time. She was now among the most famous women in the world. She died on August 5th, 1962 from an overdose of sleeping pills.

Diana, Princess of Wales

Diana was the princess of hearts; so popular was she. She married Prince Charles, heir to the British Throne. Diana, Princess of Wales was a beautiful woman who played the leading role in more than a hundred charities. She gave birth to two sons. On August 30, 1997 she died in a car crash.

Phoolan Devi

Phoolan Devi was the bandit queen in the Chambal valley. She led a gang of dacoits and targeted high caste - villages. She became a heroine in popular imagination. Finally she surrendered in 1983. Later she was elected to the Lok Sabha. But, she was shot dead by her enemies in 2001.

Jiang Qing

claimed she was only following the orders of Chairman Mao, but in practice, she abused her position to pursue political enemies and target anything 'intellectual' or 'artistic'. After Mao's death, she was tried and convicted in 1981, and imprisoned for life. She committed suicide 1991.

Mata Hari

Mata Hari was the stage name of Margaretha Geertruida Zelle, a Dutch dancer. During World War I, the French sent her to spy in Belgium, but she helped their enemy Germany also. So, she was shot dead by a French firing squad.

Imelda Marcos

Imelda Marcos was the wife of Ferdinand E. Marcos, the 10th president of Philippines. Known as the steel butterfly, she lived a life of luxury. She owned 2700 pairs of shoes.

CLARIFICATIONS & CORRECTIONS

It is our policy to correct errors, and present differing views and clarifications about the contents in previous issues. Please send in your feedback, mentioning the title and page number.

Professor Durga Nath Dhar from Rae Bareli points out a mistake in the May, 2009 issue of Tell Me Why, METALS on page 38.

The credit of the prized strategy should go to the Nobel prize winner George de Hevesy, and not to Niels Bohr. An ingenious method was employed by Hevesy in preventing the German Army from stealing the two Nobel Prize gold medals. He dissolved the gold medals in aqua regia, and left it in an obscure corner of Niels Bohr's laboratory. After occupation forces left Denmark, he then recovered gold from the solution by precipitating it with the addition of zinc. The Nobel Society recast the two Nobel Prize medals from the gold.

Thank you Prof. D.N. Dhar for your valuable feedback.

Editor

I Wonder Why? The question of the month

Aren't there many little things you have wondered about, but didn't know whom to ask? Send us your questions, and we will give you the fascinating reasons behind the incredible mysteries of life.

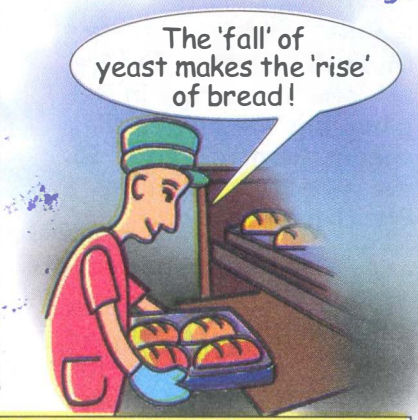
How does yeast make bread rise?

Yeasts are one-celled fungal organisms. One ounce of yeast contains 200 billion cells. Yeast has unique properties that mankind has been exploiting since before 4000 B.C. The Egyptians were the first to make leavened bread.

Yeasts break down and ferment sugar into alcohol and carbon dioxide (CO_2). Bakers take advantage of yeast's production of carbon dioxide to make bread light and airy.

When making dough, yeast is mixed with flour, water, and salt. The proteins in wheat flour form gluten, a tenacious elastic substance that gives the dough its cohesiveness during kneading. When the dough is kneaded, the proteins in the flour arrange themselves so that they can trap the carbon dioxide produced by the yeast as it ferments the sugars in the flour. The trapped carbon dioxide creates a large number of pores in the bread that make it rise. As the dough rises, the yeast cells become separated from the nutrients, and the process gradually slows down. Kneading the dough again will renew the process, causing it to rise again.

Jacob George



MANORAMA TELL ME WHY - GREAT WOMEN

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